WORKERS VANGUARD

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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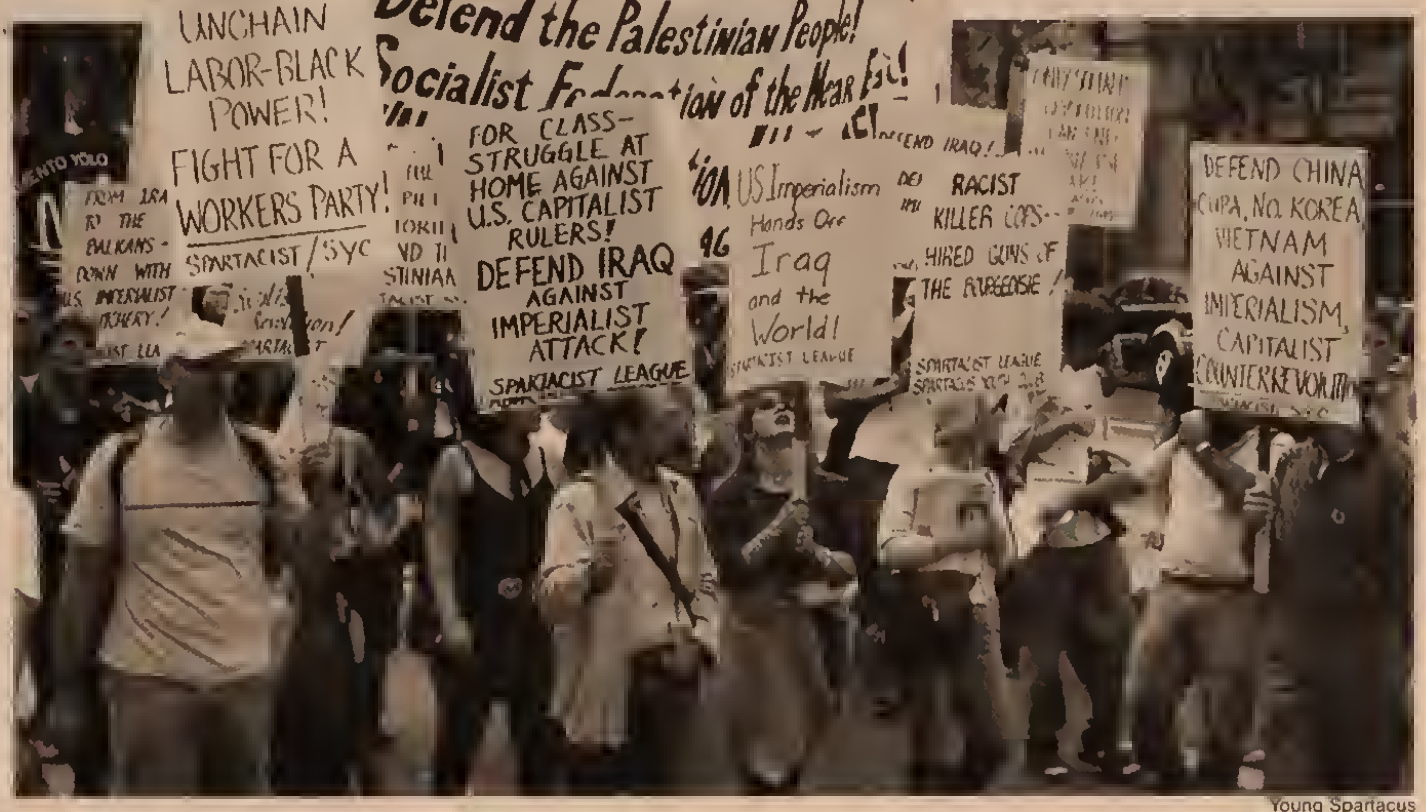
No. 794

3 January 2003

"War on Terror" = War on Immigrants, Blacks, Labor

Fight for a Workers America!



Young Spartacus

SL/SYC contingent at September 28 demonstration in San Francisco protesting war moves against Iraq and calling for defense of Palestinian people.

Defend Iraq Against U.S. Attack!

DECEMBER 20—Moving a step closer to war, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell hit the airwaves last night to declare that Iraq had committed a "material breach" of the recently passed United Nations Security Council resolution. The supposed breach came in the form of the 12,000-page report submitted by Iraq earlier this month detailing the country's weapons programs. From the moment the report was issued, before even one word of it was translated from the original Arabic, the U.S. and British imperialists went on a propaganda rampage, declaring it all to be "lies." As an Iraqi official noted, "Obviously they haven't read it. They didn't even bother." The Bush administration is intent on waging a reactionary imperialist war against Iraq; all the UN resolutions, the weapons inspections and the like are merely meant to provide a cover for U.S. imperialism's designs.

The weapons inspections themselves are nothing more than a *pretext* for war. If chief inspector Hans Blix and his cohorts find something, then the U.S. will have its ostensible reason to go to war; if nothing is found, then Iraq is obviously "hiding something" and war is needed to disarm it. In fact, it was not until Blix condemned Iraq's report that Powell made his comments, declaring: "The inspectors said that Iraq has failed to provide new information. We agree." And even while the inspectors roam the country, U.S. and

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Hundreds Arrested in Racist INS Roundup in Los Angeles

Free All the Detainees!

LOS ANGELES, December 21—More than 3,000 people, predominantly Iranian Americans, gathered at the federal building in Westwood on December 18 to protest the arrest of hundreds of Near Eastern men and boys who had been ordered to register with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Some put the number of arrests as high as 1,000. Detainees were herded into mass holding cells and threatened with deportation. Arrests have also taken place in Houston, Cleveland, Washington, D.C. and other cities. This adds a chilling new chapter in the U.S. government's escalating racist state repression under the rubric of the "war on terror."

The arrests took place when thousands complied with an order by Attorney General John Ashcroft that *all* males 16 and over from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Sudan who are not citizens or permanent residents register at an INS office by December 16. Those who showed up were photographed, fingerprinted and subjected to humiliating "interviews." Many of these men have lived in the U.S. for over 20 years and had valid worker, student or visitor visas; many had pending applications for permanent residency. As the

continued on page 2

WV Photo

December 18: Thousands rally outside Westwood Federal Building in Los Angeles to protest anti-immigrant roundups.

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INS Roundup...

(continued from page 1)

Chicago Tribune (20 December 2002) reported, this INS "program is part of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, designed to track millions of foreigners on temporary visas." Residents from 15 additional countries must also submit to this draconian program in the next two months. Ranging from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Yemen, Tunisia and other Islamic bourgeois societies, the list also includes North Korea, a bureaucratically deformed workers state in the cross hairs of U.S. imperialism's drive for capitalist counterrevolution.

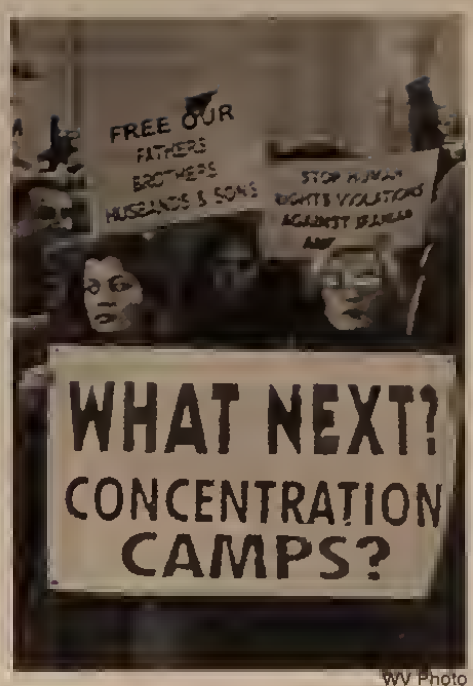
Many in L.A. and Orange County were detained on the basis of alleged "visa violations" which were in fact caused by the failure of the INS to process its own paperwork in a timely fashion. According to the *Los Angeles Times* (20 December 2002), the INS "claims it had to lock some people up because it couldn't process the crush that showed up too close to the December 16 registration deadline." The detainees were strip-searched, hosed down with cold water and in many cases forced to sleep outside or on bitterly cold concrete floors in rooms holding 50. Some detainees were shipped hundreds of miles away to an INS holding facility in Arizona. One 16-year-old was seen being pulled from his crying pregnant mother, who was told by a sadistic INS agent that her son would never return home. Most were held for at least three days, often denied drinking water and given limited food rations. L.A. radio reported that one man died after being denied medicine.

Protesters at the December 18 demonstration chanted, "Free our people now!" and raised placards demanding, "Free Our Fathers, Brothers, Husbands and Sons." Some banners pointedly asked, "What Next? Concentration Camps?" Many raised the similarity between the current mass roundup of Near Eastern immigrants and the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. At that time, the U.S. government coupled its war in the Pacific against its Japanese imperialist rival with the roundup of its perceived Japanese American "enemies within." Now, as U.S. imperialism prepares a new devastating war against semicolonial Iraq, immigrants from the Near East in particular are deemed suspect, with legal residents from Iraq and even U.S. citizens of Iraqi descent targeted for mass detention. According to the *New York Times* (17 November 2002), "In the event of an American invasion of Iraq, officials would intensify the program's mission through arrests and detentions of Iraqis or Iraq sympathizers if they are believed to be planning domestic terrorist operations" (see "Government Threatens Roundup of Iraqi Americans," *WV* No. 792, 29 November 2002).

While immigrants from Christian Armenia were initially included in the registration requirements, this was quickly withdrawn as a "mistake." Many of the Iranian men arrested in L.A. were Jews, including those who fled Iran after the victory of Ayatollah Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution," and are now being persecuted as perceived Muslims. Combining sheer ignorance with racist contempt, the INS in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, according to one Arab American spokesman, "informed" the Near Eastern community about the registration requirements by contacting the local "Indo-American Business Association," assuming that Indians are Arabs because "their women are covered" (*Los Angeles Times*, 17 December 2002)!

As of December 20, most of the victims of the racist INS dragnet in L.A. have reportedly been released after their harrowing ordeal. However, the INS, which has never revealed the number of those arrested, claims that 20 remain in custody due to expired visitor visas. This is on top of the many detainees still in custody stemming from the roundups of at least 1,200 immigrants following 9/11, hundreds of whom have already been deported. We demand: Free all the detainees—No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

A common placard at the December 18 demonstration in Los Angeles read, "Detain Terrorists Not Innocent Immigrants." But the bipartisan "war on terror" proclaimed in the aftermath of the criminal September 11 attack on the World Trade Center is *nothing but* a pretext for imperialist war abroad and a war at home against immigrants, black people and ultimately the entire working class. Following 9/11, the government has pushed through its "anti-terror" laws by claiming that they would "only" target immigrants from Near Eastern and South Asian countries. But as the Bush administration shreds ever more constitutional rights, it is clear that the domestic "war on terror" is using the victimization of the most vulnerable as the opening shot in intimidating the population as a whole. The government has already set its sights on the trade unions in the name of "national interests," invoking the slave-labor Taft-Hartley law in October against locked-out members of the West Coast International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and gutting membership in federal employees unions with the establishment of the Homeland Security Department.



WV Photo

L.A. protest. Hundreds were detained and brutalized in INS dragnet.

It is crucial for the labor movement to mobilize in defense of immigrants and all those in the cross hairs of the capitalist government's "war on terror." This understanding was demonstrated in action last February when the Partisan Defense Committee and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense initiated a united-front mobilization, with ILWU longshoremen at its core, in defense of immigrants and in opposition to the USA-Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act. As the call for that demonstration pointed out (*WV* No. 773, 25 January 2002), Bush and his government have "created the spectre of an 'enemy within' in order to strengthen the powers of their own consummately violent state. But what America's racist rulers can get away with will be determined by class struggle. We must fight *now* to defend our rights and jobs, and the rights and jobs of our immigrant brothers and sisters." What is urgently posed is the fight for more and larger such mobilizations in defense of our rights against the racist rulers of American imperialism.■

Those Who Labor Must Rule!

TROTSKY

LENIN

The counterposed interests of labor and capital invariably lead to class conflict. In his 1891 introduction to Karl Marx's Wage Labour and Capital, *Friedrich Engels explained that only the working class has both the objective interest and social power to sweep away the inherently exploitative and irrational capitalist system and replace it with an egalitarian socialist society.*

It is the working class alone which produces all values. For value is only another expression for labour, that expression whereby in our present-day capitalist society is designated the amount of socially necessary labour contained in a particular commodity. These values produced by the workers do not, however, belong to the workers. They belong to the owners of the raw materials, machines, tools and the reserve funds which allow these owners to buy the labour power of the working class. From the whole mass of products produced by it, the working class, therefore, receives back only a part for itself. And as we have just seen, the other part, which the capitalist class keeps for itself and at most has to divide with the class of landowners, becomes larger with every new discovery and invention, while the part falling to the share of the working class (reckoned per head) either increases only very slowly and inconsiderably or not at all, and under certain circumstances may even fall.

But these discoveries and inventions which supersede each other at an ever-increasing rate, this productivity of human labour which rises day by day to an extent previously unheard of, finally give rise to a conflict in which the present-day capitalist economy must perish. On the one hand are immeasurable riches and a superfluity of products which the purchasers cannot cope with; on the other hand, the great mass of society proletarianised, turned into wage-workers, and precisely for that reason made incapable of appropriating for themselves this superfluity of products. The division of society into a small, excessively rich class and a large, propertyless class of wage-workers results in a society suffocating from its own superfluity, while the great majority of its members is scarcely, or even not at all, protected from extreme want. This state of affairs becomes daily more absurd and—more unnecessary. It *must* be abolished, it *can* be abolished. A new social order is possible in which the present class differences will have disappeared and in which—perhaps after a short transitional period involving some privation, but at any rate of great value morally—through the planned utilisation and extension of the already existing enormous productive forces of all members of society, and with uniform obligation to work, the means for existence, for enjoying life, for the development and employment of all bodily and mental faculties will be available in an equal measure and in ever-increasing fulness.

—Friedrich Engels, "Introduction" to Karl Marx,
Wage Labour and Capital (1891)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 794 **3 January 2003**

SWP Editor Threatened with Deportation

Hands Off Róger Calero!

Róger Calero, associate editor of the Socialist Workers Party's Spanish-language publication *Perspectiva Mundial* and a staff writer for the *Militant*, was seized by the INS at Houston International Airport as he returned from reporting assignments in Guadalajara, Mexico and Havana, Cuba. After being locked up in a crowded Houston-area INS jail for ten days, Calero was released on bond on December 13 after protests from immigrant rights and labor groups, including the president of Calero's former union, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 in St. Paul, Minnesota. The INS still seeks to deport Calero, a permanent resident of the United States who has lived here since 1985, to his native Nicaragua.

The government claims to be attempting to exclude Calero on the basis of a 1988 minor drug conviction from when he was in high school, but this is an utter sham. In fact, when Calero applied for permanent resident status in 1989—which was approved in 1990—he included information about his conviction, which the INS waived when they gave him his green card. The INS is clearly going after this journalist for political reasons. As a 14 December Partisan Defense Committee letter in defense of Calero noted, "This outrage is meant to intimidate any dissenters; it is a frontal assault on all political activists who would oppose the current imperialist war drive or defend the Cuban people from the U.S. stranglehold embargo."

The threatened deportation of Calero comes in the context of a vicious nationwide dragnet following September 11 aimed at immigrants, Palestinian activists and people of Arab and South Asian descent. Under the "war on terror," hundreds have been thrown into INS detention without even the pretense of due process or respect for constitutional rights. In Southern California, the INS recently ordered that immigrants from North African, Near Eastern and Muslim countries—but also North Korea—register with the government, and at least 500 have already been arrested (see front-page article).

The arrest of a leftist immigrant guilty of nothing but practicing political journalism is a highly dangerous development for all opposed to the depredations of this rotten system. Letters demanding that deportation proceedings against Calero be dropped should be sent to Hipolito Acosta, District Director, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 126 Northpoint Drive, Houston, TX 77060; fax (281) 774-5989. *Hands off Róger Calero!*■

U.S. Senate: White Bigot Millionaires' Club

Reuters

White-supremacist Senator Strom Thurmond (seated) celebrated by Bush, Lott and others at White House birthday party in December.

Undead Racist Zombies of Mississippi (and Beyond)

Trent Lott "just got caught with his mouth open," said Ramon Verdejo Jr., an aid officer at New Rochelle, New York's Monroe College, reflecting black and minority reaction to the media's revelation that the U.S. Senate contains—brace yourself—a pack of reactionary racists. At a celebration of the 100th birthday of stone segregationist Senator Strom Thurmond this December, Mississippi Senator Trent Lott gushed over the ancient all-purpose reactionary: "When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either." Thurmond ran for president in 1948 as the candidate of the breakaway "Dixiecrat" faction of Southern Democrats galvanized into reaction by the Democrats' adoption of a mild civil rights plank and President Harry Truman's announcement that he would integrate the armed forces following World War II. White-supremacist Thurmond declared then: "All the laws of Washington and all the bayonets of the Army cannot force the n-----s into our homes, our schools, our churches."

Lott was forced to resign as Republican majority leader for spilling the beans in an unguarded moment before reporters, for talking in public the way the clubby Senators do among themselves. He openly expressed the deep racist contempt for and cruelty toward black people of this country's bourgeois politicians, whether Republican or Democrat. With dizzying hypocrisy, the Bush administration ostentatiously distanced itself from Lott's disgrace. This from a gang of "good old boys" whose narrow electoral victory involved keeping large numbers of black people from voting in Florida, whose attorney general John Ashcroft is an open admirer of the Confederacy and who are riding roughshod over the rights of immigrants, black people and workers in their brutal drive to dominate the world. Meanwhile, stung conservatives began digging skeletons out of Democrats' closets, like Senator Robert Byrd, another wizened Washington fixture. Byrd, held up today as a noble antiwar patrician, began his political career as a Kleagle (recruiter) in the Ku Klux Klan of his native West Virginia. He filibustered for 14 hours against the 1964 Civil Rights Act and ran amok on Fox News last year, babbling uncontrollably about "white n-----s" in a performance reeking with race and class viciousness.

This public eruption of Senatorial contempt for blacks and the poor recalls Southern novelist William Faulkner's comment, "The past is not dead. In fact, it's not even past." Thurmond's name alone, arch-representative of a generation of vicious racists, calls up unquiet ghosts and the great unfinished business of the Civil War. From America's origin as a slaveholding nation through the social revolution of the Civil War, the subsequent betrayal of black aspirations in the defeat of Radical Reconstruction, the battles against Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and 1960s and on to today, the burning fault line in U.S. history is the question of black freedom. The racial oppression of black people is used to divide the working class and weaken the labor movement as a whole.

By holding celebrations for Strom Thurmond today, the Senate (and the Bush White House) thereby spit on those who battled segregation, the heroes and martyrs of the civil rights movement. Birmingham, Alahama, 1963—four little black girls dead in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church; Philadelphia, Mississippi, 1964—civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman murdered by the sheriff's department and Ku Klux Klan; young black children dressed in their best clothes and clutching schoolbooks walking gauntlets of shrieking, spitting, hysterical white adults; Eugene "Bull" Connor unleashing firehoses and German shepherd attack dogs on civil rights marchers in Birmingham; torture, brutal beatings by police and KKKers, firebombings and murders—that's what "Dixiecrat" means.

Scratch a Democrat and Find a Dixiecrat

That the Republican Party is an overt party of racist repression and big business is not news to our readers. One need only recall the 1988 elections, when George Bush Sr. used the "Willie Horton" affair—the escape of a black convicted murderer while on furlough from a Massachusetts prison who later raped a white woman—to portray his Democratic opponent, Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis, as "soft on crime." Yet illusions remain that somehow the Democrats are better, or at least a real "lesser evil." They aren't, as their sordid history of smashing black aspirations makes clear. From its inception the Democratic Party was the party of the slaveholding Old South and of Dixiecrat segregation. After 1948, when Truman won the election, most of the Dixiecrats, formally known as the "States Rights Democratic Party," came back into the fold (Thurmond switched to the Republicans in 1964).

Exposing the alliance between Southern Dixiecrats and Northern liberals that was forged by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Malcolm X said in the 1960s: "A vote for a Democrat is a vote for a Dixiecrat." In a challenge to the old status quo, militant civil rights workers in SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) organized the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, which registered 80,000 Mississippi blacks previously kept off the voter rolls and fought to have their delegation replace the usual all-white Jim Crow one at the 1964 Democratic Party convention in Atlantic City. Northern liberal darling Hubert Humphrey and his protégé Walter Mondale (who rose from the dead to run for the Senate this fall) were assigned to put the boot in the face of these black voters, keeping them from being seated. As his reward, Humphrey got the vice-presidential nomination under Lyndon Johnson.

Mild as it was, Lyndon Johnson's 1964 Civil Rights Act broke the historic Democratic Party hold over the South; ever since, the only real domestic contest between Republicans and Democrats is over who can best appeal to the Southern white racist vote, veering from Nixon's "Southern strategy" to Jimmy ("ethnic purity") Carter back to the Republicans, with an interlude of Southerner Bill Clinton, who proved his loyalty to the legacy of the Old South during the 1992 campaign by personally ensuring that a brain-damaged black man on Arkansas death row was executed. It was under Clinton that "welfare as we know it" was smashed, affirmative action programs were further gutted and a huge expansion in prisons and speedup on death row were instituted.

It's rather bitterly amusing to watch these cynical D.C. politicians sling lots of mud at each other. But such periodic open outbursts of racism are no aberration, but reflect the reality of intensifying black oppression in this society, where the death penalty has replaced the lynch rope and prisons have replaced plantations as instruments of race subjugation. Blacks and Latinos are the majority of prisoners, and one out of every four black men in their 20s is either in prison, on probation or on parole. The present rate of joblessness for blacks is 11 percent, a nine-year high. Social researcher Dalton Conley points out in his article "Thurmond's Loss Hasn't Mattered Much After All" (*Newsday*, 19 December 2002): "The story of racial inequality is not that different than it was at the start of the civil rights struggle. In 1950, blacks were about twice as likely to be unemployed as whites. Today that figure remains unchanged." He points out that a black man earns about 70 cents for a white man's dollar, and the typical black family owns only one-eighth the net worth of the typical white family. And de facto, if not legal, segregation in schools and neighborhoods is still the norm.

U.S. Senate: Bulwark Against "Swinish Multitude"

The liberal *Nation* whines, "Lott Should Resign" because he's hurting "precious standards of government probity and equity" (30 December 2002). Well, he did. However, those "precious standards" the *Nation* is so concerned about are the standards of capitalist class rule. The American Constitution of 1787, which legitimized black chattel slavery, was consciously designed as a bulwark of social control over what Thomas Jefferson called "the swinish multitude," especially urban workingmen, whom he believed to be "the panders of vice and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned."

The U.S. Senate, American equivalent of the British House of Lords (though lacking the requirement of hereditary insanity), was created as a bulwark against the "rabble" and is an extremely undemocratic institution. Each state gets two Senators regardless of size, which disenfranchises large urban areas with lots of minority, black and working-class people in favor of Deep South or Western thinly populated and more conservative regions. In fact, all the main structures of U.S. government, including the imperial presidency, the Electoral College system, the U.S. Supreme Court and other appointed-for-life court systems were designed as barriers to democratic freedoms.

The vile racist zombies lurching around the Senate won't be laid to rest, and our own martyrs and heroes won't be fully honored, until we win our fight for a third American revolution, a proletarian revolution led by the multiracial working class that will put an end to this racist nightmare. Only then will the unfinished business of the Civil War and the broken promises of Reconstruction be fulfilled and the way finally opened to a socialist society of equality, dignity and freedom. ■

UPI

Little Rock, 1957: Black student jeered by rabid white mob as she enters Central High School. Dixiecrats vowed: Integration, never!

Waselchuk/i-Africa

Unemployed miners from Lesotho, part of South Africa's immigrant workforce.

Oscar G

Lindelani immigrant detention center.

South Africa: Down With ANC Government Anti-Immigrant Dragnet!

Defend the Unions! Defend Immigrants!

The following article is adapted from a Spartacist South Africa presentation at the University of the Witwatersrand in April 2002 to protest immigrant murders.

The poisoned fruit of neo-apartheid capitalist rule is seen in the unremitting roundup, detention, deportation and murder of immigrants and the massive obstacles thrown up to political asylum. The anti-immigrant witchhunt starkly reveals the reactionary face of the bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress (ANC) and its allies. In March, Nigerian and Malawian immigrants were killed at the Lindelani detention centre in Krugersdorp on the West Rand. Five guards beat and *sjambokked* [bullwhipped] them to death. Detainees said the guards responsible had taken money to release the men but brought them back to the centre instead. In April a Zimbabwean, who had fled the firebombing and looting of an "informal settlement" in Zandspruit [north of Johannesburg], also died in detention at Lindelani, where he fell ill. Roundups like "Operation Crackdown" routinely target immigrants for having skin deemed "too dark" or for not speaking "South African" languages. The front page of the Johannesburg *Star* (5 April 2002) carried a dramatic photo showing a documented Burundian ensnared in one such dragnet, with a caption including his plea: "Don't send me back—just kill me now."

The ANC-led government orchestrates and manipulates an anti-immigrant backlash, fomenting countless attacks. There were pogromist attacks against Angolans in the Du Noon suburb in the Western Cape and Somali-owned shops in Port Elizabeth. Nor are these atrocities simply a recent phenomenon. In the late summer of 1998, a rabid mob, whipped into frenzy against "foreigners" at a rally of unemployed in Pretoria, brutally murdered three immigrants from other African countries on a commuter train (see "South Africa: Protest Lynch Mob Murder of Immigrants," *WV* No. 696, 11 September 1998). The bourgeois press feeds into rising fratricidal hatreds, as exemplified by a typical headline from the *Sowetan*: "Nigerian Criminals Must Be Expelled" (4 August 2002). Anti-immigrant racism is a timeworn method to divide the proletariat and deflect class struggle. Spartacist South Africa stands for full citizenship rights for all who manage to cross the borders, and seeks to drive home the understanding that the source of exploitation of all labour is the capitalist system.

The South African capitalists have long exploited migrant workers, coming mostly from Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland, who form a strategic component of labour in the gold and diamond mines. These neighbouring countries often sheltered South African exiles during the apartheid era and identified strongly with the ANC. Following the ANC's rise to power in 1994, South Africa became a magnet for labourers and merchants from across the continent looking for jobs and shelter. Some immigrants are refugees from war and famine in places like Rwanda, Nigeria and Congo—countries where the South African bourgeoisie has sought to realise its own regional expansionist ambitions, and to act as the junior partner of Anglo-American imperialism. The ascendance of a layer of ANC politicians as black front men for white capitalist rule has facilitated South Africa's growing appetite to dominate the region.

To maintain capitalist order, the ANC increasingly relies on even the most reactionary and repressive aspects of the previous white-supremacist regime. In a scene reminiscent of Nationalist Party rule, 1998 video footage showed cops from Benoni, east of Johannesburg, laughing as they used three immigrants from Mozambique as training bait for police dogs. The essential continuity from anti-immigrant policies of the apartheid rulers and the neo-apartheid Tripartite Alliance is readily apparent. Thus, even the bourgeois-liberal *Mail and Guardian* (24-30 May 2002) characterised the recently enacted immigration law as "just a more sophisticated version of the Aliens Control Act of 1991." In an article titled "Home Affairs Denies Targeting Africans" (*Sowetan*, 5 April 2002), the deportation of Zimbabwean musician Adrian Anesu "Appleseed" Muphemhi of the highly successful Bongo Maffin band is "justified" under the apartheid-era Aliens Control Act, because "illegal immigrants had flooded the country and were impacting negatively on its resources."

For all President Thabo Mbeki's obscurantist and reactionary talk about an "African Renaissance," the new legislation is decidedly anti-African, sending a clear message to African governments that their citizens are not welcome in South Africa, legally or otherwise. The bill empowers raids in communities and workplaces and institutionalises the identity card, or hated *dompas* [passbook]. The possession of documentation guarantees nothing, as it is common for police raids to seize and destroy identity papers and to extort money from their victims. The enforcement strategy has been likened to the apartheid-era Influx Controls Act, which restricted the movement of Africans out of the so-called homelands. The deportation figures for immigrants from southern Africa are already staggering. The state "repatriated" about 24,000 people in January and February to Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The latest official composite figures available are from the year 2000, when 146,000 immigrants were deported. By contrast, the number of legal immigrants to South Africa in 1999 was less than 1,400 from all other countries.

Depredations of capitalism and imperialism inevitably mean a surge of immigration to South Africa, which is the economic hub of the continent. In a country where "official" unemployment among the African majority hovers around 50 per cent, the ANC-led regime has sought to blame "foreigners" for rising unemployment caused by mine closures and job losses due to its massive privatisation drive. The devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic, accelerated by the cruel and criminal obstructionism of the ANC/SACP [South African Communist Party] regime, is straining to the breaking point the social fabric. The political climate is rife with resurgent tribalism, reflected in references to the domination of the "Xhosa nostra" and in chauvinist calls for anti-Indian pogroms, embodied in Mbongeni Ngema's song "Amandiya." As we wrote in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 12, "South Africa Powder Keg," given the massive and stark inequalities between the white capitalist class and the impoverished black African toilers, "so long as the struggle over the redistribution of the country's wealth is defined in national-ethnic terms and limited to a purely South African framework, it could well trigger race war, bloody tribalist conflict and economic collapse. Only a ***proletarian internationalist perspective***, linking the reconstruction of South Africa to a world socialist revolution, can

AP

Johannesburg, October 1: March by COSATU union federation at start of two-day strike against government privatization plans.

ensure that a just and egalitarian society will he erected" (February 1995).

Anti-Immigrant Attacks and Bourgeois Triumphalism

Anti-immigrant bigotry has come to define racist, right-wing politics from West Europe to South Africa to East Asia. In the western countries, as much as in South Africa, many immigrants are actually refugees from imperialist wars, for example in the Balkans and Afghanistan, or from fratricidal conflicts in Africa. The South African bourgeoisie bears particular responsibility in the Congo, where, under the rubric of UN "peacekeeping," it has sought to further its aims as a regional gendarme.

Capitalism needs a hogeyman. Since the demise of the Soviet Union, the "red menace" has been largely replaced with an orchestrated hysteria against the immigrant "hordes" and in Europe and America, since September 11, against the "green menace" of Islamic fundamentalism. The ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union a decade ago was a monumental defeat for the international proletariat. In its wake came bourgeois triumphalism hailing the supposed "death of communism" and a reactionary social climate with a resurgence of nationalism, a sharp rise in anti-woman, anti-homosexual bigotry, fratricidal war and "ethnic cleansing" especially in Europe, but also in Africa. As we wrote in the International Communist League statement "Capitalist Europe's War on Immigrants Is a War on All Workers" (*WV* No. 784, 12 July 2002):

> "According to its economic needs, capitalism brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labour, principally immigrants from poorer countries.... We in the ICL fight for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism. The struggle in defence of immigrant labour today is a vital task for the working class as a whole. We fight for: ***Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! Organise the unorganised! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions! For labour/immigrant mobilisations against fascist attacks!***"

Since the criminal and indefensible attack on the World Trade Centre on September 11, capitalist governments around the world, not the least South Africa, have seized upon the U.S.-led "war on terrorism" to bolster the repressive apparatus of the state against immigrants, workers and the oppressed. In every country where we exist, the ICL has fought to expose the lie of "national unity" between workers and bosses and to rally the proletariat in class solidarity with immigrants and minorities. The "war on terrorism" is a pretext for a stepped-up offensive against the working class as a whole.

North of the Limpopo River and south of the Sahara, joblessness frequently runs as high as 70 per cent and yearly per capita income may fall to 2,865 rand [$330] a year. AIDS is eliminating a disproportionate number of breadwinners and leaving behind an army of orphans and dependents unable to tend to fields as effectively as their parents. In the Middle Ages, the ravages of the "Black Death" (bubonic plague) were blamed on Jews accused of poisoning wells. Then too, poor people from rural areas who flooded the cities were labeled as "misdoers." Along with Jews, they were made the scapegoats and victims of pogroms. Today, it is immigrants and asylum-seekers who are the "misdoers" of sub-Saharan Africa—at whose feet the scourge of AIDS is falsely laid—but with a crucial difference.

Hosefros/NY Times

Nadine Hutton

South African president Mbeki with Bush, June 2001. Forced from their homes, residents of Thembilihle squatter camp near Johannesburg burn Mbeki's image, July 2002.

Immigrant workers, including "illegal" immigrants, are not simply defenceless victims of the capitalist exploiters and their state. They are a living link between the South African proletariat and the workers throughout the region. Detainees at the Lindelani centre conducted a courageous protest against the two murders in March, which was suppressed by police lockdown. In May, the immigrant defence organisation International Association of Foreigners (INOF) brought out thousands to protest these murders and called for the shutting down of Lindelani. At a subsequent INOF protest, Spartacist South Africa salesmen saw Nigerians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans hovering in separate clots waiting for a chance to speak, and heard appeals to Pan-African "unity." Some demonstrators lamented the non-participation of Chinese or Pakistani immigrants. Pan-Africanist rhetoric is counterpoised to an international working-class fight against capitalism or any appeal to Chinese, South Asian or Arab immigrant workers. To cite one hideous historical example, the persecution and expulsion of Indians from Idi Amin's Uganda was perpetrated under the banner of "Africa for Africans." In the hands of South Africa's Mbeki, "African unity" serves the South African bourgeoisie's regional interests and also means continued domestic oppression.

Reuters

Durban: AIDS activists demand desperately needed medications in protest outside July 2000 world AIDS conference.

At the INOF protests we have seen no representation from the COSATU union federation, a fact consistent with the perspectives of its pro-capitalist leadership. The unions should be a crucial bulwark against South Africa sliding into a vortex of racial and tribal strife and anti-immigrant racism, but this won't happen as long as the union leadership is a partner in the Tripartite Alliance government with the reformist South African Communist Party and the bourgeois-nationalist ANC. COSATU makes noises about opposing attacks on black foreigners from southern Africa and calls for an immigration policy that "reflects South Africa's democratic transition." The politically dominant force in COSATU is the South African Communist Party, whose chairman, Charles Nqakula, is the Safety and Security Minister directing the hated cops spearheading terror against immigrants.

In press statements, COSATU evinces concern for immigrant workers in mining and farming, saying that the "Department of Labour must take full responsibility to insure the enforcement of immigrant workers rights." But this is paper-thin. For example, in Gauteng in August, inspectors from the Department of Labour raided several chemical and textile plants. COSATU condemned the conditions under which the immigrant workers toiled as "tantamount to slavery" ***even as they were deported***. Such actions are typical of reformist union bureaucrats, thus allowing the cruel exploitation to continue. Immigrants without papers can therefore be mercilessly exploited, which is why the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants is all the more critical. In 1999, miners union leaders pushed for a moratorium on hiring Mozambicans during wage negotiations. And at a COSATU congress, a furore was raised against union caps produced in China. Such anti-Chinese diatribes are not only protectionist but anti-Communist, dovetailing with the threats of imperialism against the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. The working class in South Africa and internationally should defend China against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution. The Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy driving capitalist market restoration must be ousted through proletarian political revolution to establish a regime of workers democracy committed to proletarian internationalism and to reviving the planned economy.

On May Day, COSATU announced its launch of the "Buy South African" campaign against what it called a backdrop of "rising unemployment and poverty." This campaign pushes the lie of the essential identity of interests between the employers and the working class. Its basic premise is that consumer purchases expanding the profitability of the employers will lead to hiring of more South Africans. Such chauvinist poison only reinforces the false consciousness that non-South Africans steal "our jobs" and is an obstacle to organising immigrant workers en masse into COSATU.

Only a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party, committed to an internationalist perspective, can effectively mobilise the workers movement and oppressed against the forces of tribalism and murderous nationalism. This requires a fight for revolutionary leadership of the trade unions, against the nationalist class collaboration with the bosses' parties. A party with a perspective of workers revolution in South Africa would militantly fight the chauvinist attacks on immigrants and seize every such means to extend the struggle beyond the borders of the country.

Fake Socialists Push Illusions in ANC Capitalist State

The Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) has drawn various disaffected elements behind Trevor Ngwane, an expelled ANC councillor, into struggle over basic services like electricity, housing and clean tap water. The APF includes pseudo-Trotskyist groupings like Keep Left!, followers of the late Tony Cliff, and the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), formerly known as "Militant Workers Tendency of the ANC." The APF stock in trade has been to pressure the ANC government for structural adjustments within the framework of capitalism. More recently, the APF has spouted some socialist rhetoric, denouncing the ANC government. But the APF does not address immigrant rights in its programme, despite the fact that many victims of forced removals and electricity and water cut-offs include immigrant workers.

In their publications, Keep Left! has opposed the "new racism against immigrants." In the more recent period Keep Left! has even acknowledged that this government is not acting in, but rather against, the interests of workers, blacks and immigrants. The October issue of *Keep Left!* says the Mbeki regime "attacks the workers to please the capitalists and advance South African economy among the world's capitalists." The fact remains Keep Left! supported the bourgeois-nationalist ANC coming to power in the first place by campaigning for them in the last two general elections. And until quite recently, Keep Left! was in the SACP, a component of the Tripartite Alliance implementing capitalist austerity and racist attacks. Keep Left's attempt to distance themselves from the government parties (while burying their own track record) reflects the reality that in the unions and among the plebeian poor there is increasing disillusionment with the ANC-led government and they deem it smarter to take up a more oppositional stance. Instead of warning the African masses against support to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC and its allies when it

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Young Spartacus

Youth Speak at PDC Holiday Appeals

Take a Side Against the Oppressors and Exploiters!

We print below the speech of Spartacus Youth Club spokesman Erica Jones at the New York Partisan Defense Committee Holiday Appeal on December 6 and excerpts, slightly edited for publication, from two speakers at the December 8 Bay Area PDC Holiday Appeal.

Erica Jones
New York SYC

The Spartacus Youth Club, which is the youth group of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, seeks to mobilize young people and students behind the social power of the multiracial working class to fight the capitalist system. Without labor, the capitalist system cannot function, and it is the working class that has the power to bring the wheels of capitalism to a halt. Our revolutionary program is built upon the understanding that capitalism and U.S. imperialism can only be defeated through workers revolution.

At present, it is urgent to stand against the U.S. ruling class's "war on terror," which is being used to attack immigrants, the labor movement and black people at home and as a pretext for increasingly open imperialist aggression abroad. Most concretely, this is posed by the U.S.'s imminent war on Iraq. Each time the U.S. goes unchallenged in its quest to exploit and bully defenseless countries, it also emboldens the capitalist rulers to further exploit workers and oppressed minorities here. Therefore, every strike and labor action against U.S. war aims is a threat to capitalism and its thirst for war.

On the campuses, the "war on terror" has meant increased surveillance of immigrant and minority students. And the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) has begun to creep back onto campuses from which it was banished by anti-Vietnam War protests. In September, the SYC organized an impromptu demonstration at Columbia University's activities day demanding "Military recruiters off campus!" when representatives of ROTC were spotted.

It is because of our revolutionary program of mobilizing the working class independently from the ruling class that we differ from other leftist organizations such as the International Socialist Organization (ISO), who have organized students and youth against the war on Iraq through class-collaborationist peace coalitions. In the words of *Socialist Worker* (4 October 2002): "When Washington politicians voice doubts about Bush's war drive, it opens the way for genuine opponents of the war on Iraq to be heard."

Although it is great to see people protesting the war on Iraq, groups like the ISO seek to pressure a wing of the liberal bourgeoisie to become more "enlightened" and adopt less war-mongering politics, as if it would be in the nature or interest of the capitalists to do so. For example, the October 26 antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C. organized by the Workers World Party's ANSWER coalition featured Democratic Party politicians like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson, who pushed the illusion that change can be won by voting and told protesters: "Come alive on November 5 [midterm elections day]!"

Imperialism is not a policy, but an intrinsic part of the capitalist system. The Democratic Party, to which our fake-socialist opponents adapt themselves—the party of two world wars, of Korea, of Vietnam, Bosnia, Haiti (twice) and other imperialist rampages—has no interest in ending the brutal imperialist system. In fact, as a capitalist party, it has every interest in preserving it.

By contrast, our intervention into the antiwar movement has aimed at breaking youth opposed to U.S. imperialist depredation away from a perspective of pressuring the liberal wing of the Democratic Party and winning them over to a revolutionary socialist perspective. For the demonstration on October 26 in Washington, D.C., we organized the Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent under three slogans including "Defend Iraq against imperialist attack!" Unlike the ISO and the Workers World Party, we call for the working class in the U.S. to take a side. We call for the military defense of Iraq against imperialist attack, while at the same time giving absolutely no political support to the vicious Saddam Hussein regime. Defeat of the imperialist aspirations of the U.S. and its allies would be a victory for the workers in the U.S. and oppressed throughout the world.

The struggle against war is essentially a struggle against the capitalist rulers. The capitalists use war to protect the profits they make on the backs of the world's workers. It is in the interests of the working class to eliminate the system that makes such wars inevitable. Only socialism can free the working class and oppressed internationally from the threat of imperialist war and from the exploitation of capitalism. The SYCs fight for new October Revolutions across the globe, like that led by the Bolshevik Party under V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. We, unlike our leftist opponents, offer a solution to end class oppression through our program of building a workers party that fights for workers rule. If you are a youth who hates the system of capitalism and all forms of oppression that flow from it, join the Spartacus Youth Club.

Young Spartacus
SYC helped organize Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at October 26 Washington, D.C. antiwar demonstration.

Roberto Hernandez
Pro-Palestinian activist of the Wheeler 32, UC Berkeley

The Wheeler 32 are student protesters who face administration reprisal for an April 9 Wheeler Hall demonstration and sit-in calling for the university to divest its holdings in Israel.

I want to first thank all of you here for allowing me to come and just share a little bit about what's been going on at Berkeley with the understanding that this is not just about Berkeley, but rather about larger attacks on civil liberties that have been going on since September 11 primarily.

Now the reason there's been some attention around my case. There was a total of 79 arrested—41 were students, but nine had informal resolutions. Of the 32 still pending, there's about five of us that were seniors at the time, and the university has chosen to block our degrees.

There's also another dynamic to mine that is different, and that shows the punitive nature of this whole case. I was admitted to a graduate program, also at Berkeley. I was admitted into the Ph.D. program in the Department of Comparative Ethnic Studies, and I was scheduled to start this fall. Without a B.A., you cannot start a Ph.D. program, so basically with this whole thing all semester I've just been in limbo—in limbo not really knowing as to my status, not knowing whether I'll be able to continue as a student, and without being officially registered, I also have not been able to receive my fellowship, a fellowship that I earned.

I wanted to mention briefly about the day of the actual arrests and why we think this has gone down as it has. On April 9,

Young Spartacus
SYC speaker at Bay Area Holiday Appeal.

there was first a rally, then a march and then eventually a sit-in in Wheeler Hall. Since things went down as they did, I ended up with charges of assault and battery. A cop claims that I bit him even though I don't eat pork.

Once we had received the police videos to prepare for first the criminal proceedings and now the student conduct hearings, my first instinct was to go to the portions of the arrest where this cop claims this incident happened. So I did that, and I reviewed these tapes and there's no evidence to it, nothing like that.

Another friend of mine, though, actually was watching the whole video. It's six hours of footage, and those six hours of footage revealed something that for a lot of us is always a matter of suspicion, but never really confirmed, yet here we had evidence confirming it. Four minutes into the police video they're already zooming in on me, and they follow me. This happens actually about four times throughout the police video prior to even going into Wheeler Hall. They're zooming in on me, and they're following me around as I walk around in the crowd.

I'm not yet even part of the rally, yet the UCPD is already focusing in on me over at the table. And the reason I want to point that out is because of the targeting that we know for a fact has been going on prior to September 11, but even more so since. And here with this video we realize that it's literally really close to home, that they are in fact targeting specific individuals.

It shows where we're headed. It shows where we are at right now with this new era of fear and the Patriot Act.

Zoltan Ryman
Bay Area SYC

Our interventions here in the Bay Area show our working-class perspective as well as how we differ from the rest of the left. After September 11, the "war on terror" frenzy was used against labor, immigrants and student activists. When over 200 university administrations, including that of San Francisco State University (SFSU), handed over the records of foreign students to the Feds, the SYC initiated a united-front demonstration at SFSU with the General Union of Palestine Students around the demands: "Down with SFSU collaboration with FBI witchhunt! Defend immigrant rights!" We call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Across the bay, the UC Berkeley administration faced mass opposition by students, including the SYC, after 79 pro-Palestinian demonstrators were arrested and the Students for Justice in Palestine organization suspended. The charges were dropped by the Alameda County Court, but the school administration is determined to punish 32 of the pro-Palestinian activists. We say,

WV Photo

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The first Labor Black Leagues were formed as n result of the Spartacist League-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982. We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority nnd working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal system nf racist oppression that is capitalist Americn. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist Leagne, n multiracial revnlutionary Mnrxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part nf the revolutionary movement of the workers and appressed against the bnsses and for sacialism.

WV Photo

If You Stand For—

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in johs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabherding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting, keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops and prison guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Down with anti-gay laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom!

6 Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Frce all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! For class-struggle, nonsectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

—Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge is
$3/year unemployed; $10/year employed.
For more information, contact:

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South Africa...

(continued from page 5)

counted (and was unpopular), now that there is widespread discontent with the arrogant Mbeki regime, the reformists too express criticism. Keep Left! are inveterate tailists whose approach of tying the working masses to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC was simply imitating the much larger SACP, which has played a more critical role in that regard.

In a similar vein, the DSM (affiliated with the Committee for a Workers International of Peter Taaffe) programme correctly calls for "an end to persecution" of immigrants and for housing, jobs and legal rights. Yet it was only in 1996 (!), after decades of so-called entryism, that the Taaffeites launched DSM after leaving the ANC, which they suddenly discovered was a capitalist party. In addition, this outfit ardently argues that police are really "workers in uniform" and potential allies of the working class and the oppressed—a view held in common with the Cliffites. In 1993 under the government of F.W. De Klerk, writing as *Congress Militnnt*, they demanded: "Hands off Popcru!", championing the struggles of the union for police and prison guards as a question of "labour rights." They demanded that the ANC and COSATU "defend Popcru with all of our strength. Cosatu should make Popcru a full affiliate, and pour as much resources as possible into strengthening the union" (*Congress Militnnt* No. 13, September 1993). They have never renounced support to Popcru.

Political support of the cop "union" reveals the utter incapacity of the Taaffeites to recognise a central premise of Lenin's *State and Revolution*—that the workers cannot lay hold of the ready-made machinery of the bourgeois state; it must be smashed by the working class and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Genuine communists know the police and security guards are the hired thugs of the bourgeoisie who break workers strikes and smash the heads of immigrants. Lindelani, the prisons, cops, courts and laws are the core of the state apparatus. Anti-immigrant racism is a key component of capitalist rule. It will take workers socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist state and to bring an end to anti-immigrant racism. Under ANC rule, the cops, courts and military that enforced apartheid have remained intact.

Any pretence the Taaffeites might have to being any kind of "tribune of the people" is given the lie by the attitude taken by their British and Irish affiliates to the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. Oppression of the Catholic minority is at the very foundation of the bourgeois order in Northern Ireland; it is reinforced by British imperialism and enshrined in the so-called peace deal, which rests on the British Army presence. Spartacist Group Ireland and the Spartacist League/Britain call for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Ireland as a necessary starting point for a proletarian revolutionary perspective. No good can come of British troops there and the British working class cannot make a revolution against their "own" capitalist rulers if they accept imperialist oppression in Ireland. The Socialist Party (Taaffeite group in Britain) refuses to oppose the British Army in Northern Ireland. The need to combat the oppression of Catholics is a critical point that Protestant workers must understand in order to fight in their own class interests. The Socialist Party in Ireland is known for defending the reactionary Protestant Orangemen's "right" to stage their anti-Catholic marches. Both Taaffeite groups have done their best to give credibility within the workers movement to Billy Hutchinson, who is a spokesman for Loyalist death squads.

The nationalist ANC defends the same state borders that the British colonisers arbitrarily drew in 1910 for the old Union of South Africa—borders which have no relationship to tribal or ethnic groupings. As we noted in "South Africa Powder Keg":

> "Anglo American and the other Randlords economically dominate all of southern Africa. A large percentage of the gold miners on the Witwatersrand—a key value-producing proletariat in the region—comes from ***outside*** the borders of South Africa, mainly from Lesotho and Mozambique.... Clearly, a democratic, egalitarian and rational solution to such questions can be worked out only in the framework of a socialist federation of southern Africa.... The struggle for a socialist federation of southern Africa linked to international proletarian revolution is the road to the social and economic emancipation of the continent."

Under the leadership of a revolutionary party that is armed with the programme of permanent revolution, the powerful South African proletariat can use its decisive social weight as the producers of wealth in society in defence of all the oppressed and exploited. The workers can place themselves at the head of a struggle to sweep away the system of capitalism and to reorganise society on a socialist basis. Socialist revolution in South Africa would not long survive without its international extension to the imperialist centres in Europe, the U.S. and Japan. The industrial and mineral wealth of a revolutionary South Africa would not be limited to the region south of the Limpopo River, but would be used to enable the impoverished masses of all of Africa to escape famine and destitution. Thus the fight of Spartacist South Africa to forge a genuine Leninist-Trotskyist party that would place the struggle against racism and chauvinism at the centre of the fight against capitalism is inseparable from the struggle of the ICL to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International.■

"Drop the charges against the Wheeler 32! No administration reprisals against the protesters!" Uniquely we intervened at defense organizing meetings to encourage the participants to bring their struggle to the then locked-out dock workers. We pointed out that getting the social power of militant labor behind them would represent the best possible defense for these persecuted students.

Another example of the SYCs intervening on the side of workers and the oppressed was during the clerical workers strike at UC Berkeley, which protested poverty wages and unsafe working conditions. The SYC argued to extend the strike and shut down the university. We called on students to respect the picket lines by not going to classes, while the falsely named International Socialist Organization betrayed the workers by deliberately crossing the picket lines to go to class and work. We said, "Picket lines mean don't cross!" The picket line is the battle line of class struggle! Which side do you stand on? The truth is that the ISO is neither international nor socialist. Their objective is to push capitalist politicians to have better policies, instead of teaching that capitalism *itself* is the oppressor and exploiter of the masses, that it necessarily breeds war. They attempt to tie youth and workers to the capitalist Democratic Party and its Green Party tail, which serve to keep this system alive.

The SYC has protested recent brutal attacks on gays and transgenders like the murder of Gwen Araujo in California; and we have protested the anti-gay reactionary followers of Fred Phelps, whose congregation travels around the country to whip up anti-gay hysteria. When they came to UC Berkeley's campus, they ran into gay rights activists and a militant SYC contingent. We sought to answer their provocation and make sure these religious bigots never set foot in Berkeley again. We chanted for the working class to take up the struggle for gay and women's rights as their own because the same ruling class that exploits workers looks upon gays and transgenders as "deviant." We call for government and church out of the bedroom! Down with reactionary "age of consent" laws! For full democratic rights for gays!■

Workers America...

(continued from page 1)

British jet fighters continue to pummel the U.S.-imposed "No Fly" zones in Iraq while tightening the UN starvation embargo that has already killed some 1.5 million people. Now, the Pentagon has announced the deployment of another 50,000 troops to the Persian Gulf, doubling its arsenal of war in the region. ***Defend Iraq against U.S. attack! Down with the starvation blockade! All U.S./UN forces out of the Near East!***

The fact that Iraq's military capacity stands at a third of where it was during the 1991 Gulf War underlines that defense of Iraq means, above all, pursuing class struggle against the imperialist rulers at home. To wage war abroad, U.S. imperialism demands class peace at home. This was demonstrated in October when Bush, invoking "the security of our country," imposed the strikebreaking provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act against the West Coast longshore union following a lockout by the bosses. At the same time, the "national unity" hoopla propagated by the rulers following 9/11 is wearing thin under the weight of recession, mass layoffs and grotesque corporate corruption. Earlier this month, members of the powerful transit union in New York City threatened to strike in defense of their livelihoods and bring the financial capital of the world to a screeching halt.

The "war on terror" has meant a racist witchhunt against Muslims and people of Near Eastern and South Asian descent, as well as a wholesale assault on immigrant rights and the civil liberties of the population in general. Earlier this month, nearly 1,000 immigrants from Iran and elsewhere were rounded up when they appeared at INS offices following an order to register by the Justice Department. It is in the vital interest of the multiracial American working class to fight against the government's anti-immigrant witchhunts, for these attacks are also aimed at the labor movement as a whole.

The defense of Iraq against imperialist attack is integrally linked to the defense of the working masses here against increasing exploitation and oppression, which ultimately requires the overturn of the imperialist order through workers revolution. The task is to forge a Marxist workers party to educate and mobilize the proletariat to that end.

We print below a speech by Spartacist League Central Committee member Don Alexander given at the 17th annual Partisan Defense Committee Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners held in New York City on December 6.

* * *

This is the time of year that the nauseating, hypocritical capitalists throw sops to the poor. We are here because we are rightly devoted to remembering and rendering concrete material assistance to those class-war prisoners who are languishing in the prison holes of this racist capitalist system: Mumia Abu-Jamal, the members of the MOVE commune, militant mine worker Jerry Dale Lowe and many others. Today, the jails are also increasingly filled with Arabs, Muslims and people of Near Eastern descent. The fight for freedom for all class-war prisoners is an inseparable part of waging class struggle against the capitalist rulers and fighting for the rule of the working class.

What we mean by class struggle against the capitalists is mobilizing the power of labor and its allies independently of the capitalist rulers and parties, and having confidence in only that. This means having no illusions whatsoever in the supposed "benevolence" and "neutrality" of the capitalists and their state. The current capitalist government is presided over by a very nasty and violent right-wing Republican regime, whose constant refrain is "We are at war." And we are at war. Working people and the oppressed are facing a brutal, bipartisan class war at home, while abroad, U.S. imperialism is calling for pre-emptive strikes against its perceived enemies. And the Chinese deformed workers state—despite the Stalinist bureaucracy's slavish support to the so-called "war on terror"—is high on U.S. imperialism's list.

The imperialist ruling classes want nothing less than the liquidation of the collectivized property and the planned economies of the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states of China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. And everybody here knows that if the U.S. didn't think North Korea might have nuclear weapons, U.S. imperialism right now would be trying to figure out how to invade that country. We stand for unconditional military defense of these workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracies who undermine and endanger the defense of those gains against imperialism.

AP

December 8: U.S. military exercises in Kuwait in preparation for attack on Iraq.

Richards/U.S. News & World Report

Poverty and homelessness in U.S. are on the rise with continuing world capitalist recession.

In the eyes of the capitalist exploiters, immigrants, black people, women, gays—they all belong permanently beneath the jackboot of capital. And to the rulers, the labor movement is the ultimate so-called "enemy within." At the same time, the U.S. imperialist rulers—the mass murderers of Japanese in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, of over three million Koreans, of millions of Vietnamese—are gearing up to kill more Iraqis. They aren't satiated by their United Nations-sponsored starvation sanctions, which have killed over a million and a half Iraqis. In the impending war against Iraq, U.S. imperialism is striving to grab a bigger portion of oil wealth and to send a message to their imperialist rivals: like it or not, U.S. imperialism is the world's only "superpower" and things are going to stay that way.

As revolutionary opponents of our own ruling class, we say that "anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home." The Bush administration and the Democrats seized on the criminal killing of thousands of innocent civilians at the World Trade Center to launch their so-called "war on terror." The bipartisan cry of "national unity" was used to mobilize the population behind U.S. imperialism's murderous imperialist adventure in Afghanistan. We opposed the U.S. imperialist war in Afghanistan, which killed thousands of Afghanis, and we call for U.S./UN troops out of Afghanistan. Central Asia, the Persian Gulf and the Near East.

Today, Bush goes on the airwaves to call for "regime change" in Iraq. In a U.S. war against Iraq, we have a side. We stand for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. and allied imperialism without giving an ounce of political support to the butcher Saddam Hussein, who has murdered Iraqi workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims, Kurdish people and others. Hussein came to power with the assistance of bloody U.S. imperialism. We say: Down with the UN starvation blockade! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Fight for class struggle against the capitalist rulers!

For a Workers Party That Fights for All the Oppressed!

With a deepening worldwide capitalist economic recession and plummeting stock market, hundreds of thousands of working people are being laid off and face a bleak future. Congress recently adjourned without extending unemployment benefits to thousands of people whose benefits have been exhausted. Federal workers are having their jobs privatized and face being stripped of civil service protection—all in the name of the so-called "war on terror." Homeless people who freeze and starve are treated like criminals by the capitalist politicians and jailed by their cops. And then you have the Central Park jogger case, a vicious, savage rape of a young white woman that took place in 1989 for which five black and Latino youth were framed up through coerced confessions and other means. This is the face of racist American capitalism, and this is precisely why it is very important to look at all of these cases as part of fighting for a program of united, integrated revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system.

We know that, especially in racist capitalist America today, there's deepening oppression. There is the constant and relentless assault against abortion rights, but it's not just that. You have the case of Arlene Russell, a black woman bus driver in Chicago who was viciously harassed and arrested by the police. Then you have the so-called "bad mothers" who have been thrown in jail, blamed for the deaths of their children. Remember the recent article about the woman whose child was killed by her spouse while she slept. She's been in a jail for seven years because supposedly she should have known that her boyfriend was going to kill her child!

The Bush government came down on the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), which was slapped with a union-busting Taft-Hartley injunction after the Pacific Maritime Association bosses imposed a lockout. This was an open declaration of war against the entire labor movement. Liberal Democrats like Dianne Feinstein openly supported the Taft-Hartley injunction while Barbara Lee, the darling of the left and labor bureaucrats, just said the time to apply Taft-Hartley hadn't yet arrived. We in the Spartacist League say: Down with slave-labor Taft-Hartley! Government hands off the union!

It matters what program you have if you're fighting for power. Instead of unionizing the largely immigrant port truckers and mobilizing independent working-class action against the Taft-Hartley injunction, the ILWU leadership looks to "labor-friendly" Democrats to assist the workers. This is because of their program of class-collaborationist unity with the capitalist exploiters, which is a program to stifle and quell social struggle. And you know that a couple of months prior to the lockout of longshoremen, Homeland Security head Tom Ridge, the same Tom Ridge who as Pennsylvania governor signed a death warrant against Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1995, made a series of threats warning the longshoremen not to strike.

Even though they were locked out by the maritime bosses, the ILWU showed that working people are the power in society. The working class produces the wealth of society and has the social power to bring capitalist profit to a halt. But that power is crippled by the absence of a class-struggle leadership committed to a revolutionary struggle to abolish capitalism and replace it with a workers govern-

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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

George II—The "Son-King"

"L'état c'est moi." ("I am the state")
— Louis XIV, (1643-1712) The Sun King of France

Under Louis XIV, all France existed merely to reflect his luster. All around him were but satellites to his greater glory. Wars were fought, and lands were seized as soldiers were slain, for the glory of Louis, who shone like the sun.

An American state, Louisiana, was named for him.

Under his reign, the idea of the divine right of kings, their inherent and eternal right to rule, reached its highest form.

Today, such ideas seem almost laughable.

This is the age of the divine right of capital, of the inherent and eternal right of amassed capital to rule all things. Corporate wealth and economic interest is the ruling principle of the day, and states are but instruments of their lust for gain.

George W. Bush, like his father, is hungry for reflected glory, and no glory shines in America like that of war. But we are not facing a war for glory. We are facing a war for oil, a war for capital. The Bush dynasty, and those that rule them, believe in the divine right of cash.

Iraq stands as a dark straw man, while personalized in the singularity of Saddam, who is in the maleloquent words of the Commander in Chief, "a bad man." Query: Would there be these rumors of war if Iraq were—oh, I don't know, oil-free? In Africa? In Latin-America?

Louis XIV was busy basking in the "glory" of his French Empire. George II is trying to realize "Poppy's" dream—a New World Order—with the United States as the eternal Empire, Pax Americana.

The brilliance of Louis has been succeeded by the dullness of George W., who boasts of his C-averages while a student of privilege at Yale.

Louis was the ultimate peacock in Versailles; George is the boring manager of a business: his pedigree is, in truth, his business degree. And the construction of an empire is the objective of business, so that Iraq, with its 24% of the world's oil deposits, will be little more than a vast gasoline station, with a flag.

To the charge that it is in violation of international law, business has a straight-forward, simple, and, from its perspective, compelling retort: it's good for business!

When one listens to the White House these days, if you listen closely, you'll hear the nation's 30th president, Calvin Coolidge, saying, "The chief business of the American people is business." He praised the rampant speculation that fueled the stock market. He also presided over the Great Wall Street crash of 1929, when the economy tanked. Coolidge is back!

No empire lasts forever. Rome didn't. The British didn't. The French didn't. Neither will the U.S. Empire.

24 October 2002

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If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Funds for Jamal's Legal Defense

We wish to inform our readers of a change in where to send urgently needed funds for the legal defense of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Checks made payable to "SEE Mumia Free" should be sent to: Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

ment that expropriates the capitalists. That's where the money for food, housing and decent education is initially going to come from.

In New York City, we have the contract of the Transport Workers Union (TWU) that's going to expire very soon. They face a determined capitalist enemy, a multibillionaire mayor and his Democratic Party city council partners whose response to the mounting deaths of transit workers is: "It's your fault! Eat it!" A leadership that places its faith in the Democrats, such as the "die on your knees" New Directions TWU leadership as well as the union's "old guard," are the labor lieutenants of capital in the workers movement. They play by the bosses' rules, which is a losing game. The misleaders of labor, the black preachers and politicians, like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, they sell the same "lesser evil" poison.

Despite their occasional differences, the dual parties of capitalism are united in defending and extending the world dominance of U.S. imperialism, which means continued imperialist aggression against the working people around the world and intensified assaults against workers and the oppressed at home. The only difference between the parties is in their rhetoric. The Republicans openly flaunt their ties to the Wall Street bloodsuckers; they revel in attacking the unions and oppressing minorities. The Democrats do the same thing, but lie about it, using different rhetoric to fool working people and oppressed minorities. As one black comedian once said, "The only difference between conservatives and liberals, is that the latter, the liberals, hang you from the lower part of the tree."

Those Who Labor Must Rule!

With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the world is a much more dangerous place because there is no military counterweight to monstrous U.S. imperialism—the bloodiest ruling class in the world, the main enemy of workers and the oppressed throughout the world. As the U.S. plans its bloody assault against Iraq, interimperialist rivalries between the United States, West Europe and Japan are sharpening. This is driven by their competition for additional sources of profit and spheres of economic influence. Despite their differences, however, all of the imperialist ruling classes are waging war against workers and immigrants in their countries. Tony Blair's union-hating government has been mobilizing to crush the British firefighters, whose recent strikes threaten to put a dent in "national unity" and hurt Britain's alliance with the U.S. against Iraq.

Another major question intersecting war with Iraq is the continued Zionist bleeding of the Palestinian people. It is not at all precluded that the bloody Zionist rulers might use the war against Iraq as a cover for the ethnic cleansing of the Occupied Territories. We call for Israeli troops out of the Occupied Territories. We look at the defense of Iraq as being directly linked to the defense of the Palestinian people. We are intransigent defenders of the Palestinian people against U.S.-backed, Zionist state terror.

Because of the bankruptcy of nationalism and the absence of a communist alternative, the murderous, womanhating, anti-Semitic Islamic fundamentalists have acquired increased authority among the historically cosmopolitan Palestinian population. The desperate and criminal suicide attacks against Israeli civilians carried out by reactionary fundamentalists as well as Palestinian nationalists only serve to drive the Hebrew-speaking people further into the arms of the Zionist rulers. As revolutionary Marxists, we fight to forge revolutionary internationalist Trotskyist parties in the Near East that can unite the Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers in common struggle against the Israeli and Arab rulers, who are also oppressors of Palestinian people. Only in the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East can national self-determination for both peoples be equitably realized. Only with the revolutionary overthrow of the Zionist rulers, the sheiks, the colonels and the monarchical parasites in the region can the road be opened to genuine national and social liberation. To achieve this goal means politically confronting and defeating anti-Semitism, bourgeois nationalism and illusions in imperialist democracy.

Here in the U.S., the belly of the imperialist beast, every struggle against the government's assaults on democratic rights and on civil liberties, every strike in defense of labor rights is a blow against the bipartisan war drive. Our interests lie in forging a class-struggle workers party that will rally labor and minorities to stop the Klan, the racist terrorist fascists; that will fight for full citizenship rights for immigrants; that will champion black and women's liberation; that will defend gays against the attacks of foul anti-homosexual bigots like the fascistic, Kansas-based Fred Phelps clan.

It is critical to look at all these struggles as part of building a party to break the chains of capitalist wage slavery and establish a workers government that overturns the rule of the capitalist class. I want to mention Colin Powell. Recently, Belafonte called him a "house slave." That's not half of it. Powell is a conscious representative of U.S. imperialism. He was gloating in an interview that communism is the vestigial remains of a dead ideology. Well, we know that communism is not dead and class struggle is not a relic. That's precisely why the capitalists are intensifying their repression. And that's precisely why we have to build a party like the Bolshevik Party and reforge a Fourth International that fights for a revolutionary internationalist program to bring the working class to power.

We say: Free all class war prisoners! Workers of the world unite—you have nothing to lose but your chains!■

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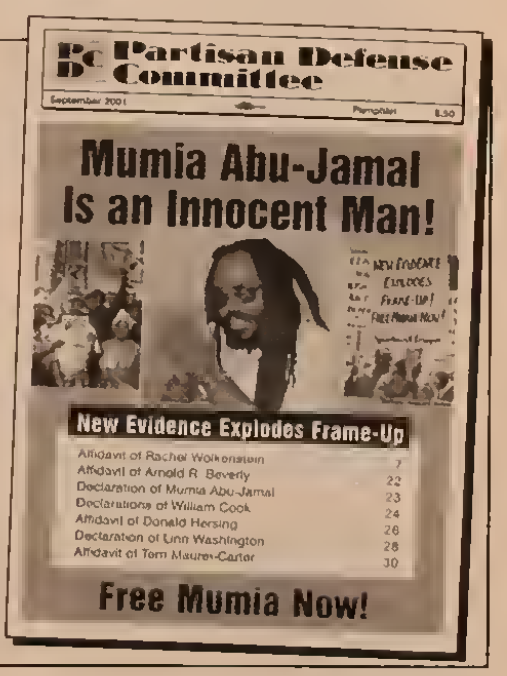


NYC Transit...

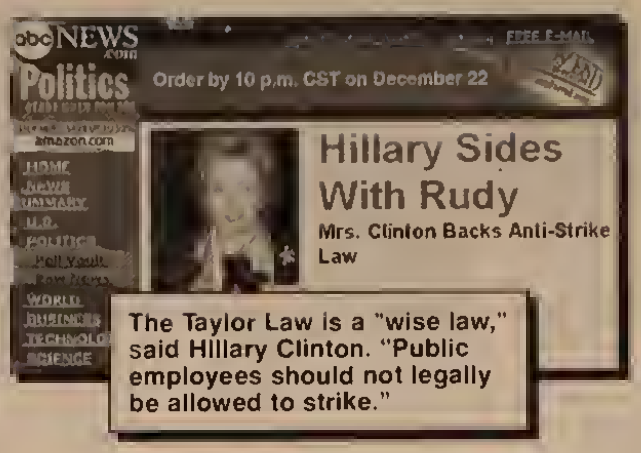
(continued from page 12)

same courts threatened massive fines against the TWU criminalizing strike action and even talk of a strike, unlike the James leadership ND at least challenged the injunction in court. But ND leaders instructed workers at an ND rally the next day to obey it and not use the word "strike."

Once in office, Toussaint made clear his aim of turning Local 100 into a political machine for the Democratic Party. To this end, he opened the doors of the union to Hillary Clinton, whose Senatorial election campaign was marked by her avid support for the use of the Taylor Law against the TWU in 1999.

Today, the self-styled militants grouped around *Rank and File Advocate* (RAFA) are calling to vote against Toussaint's sellout, as is the *Revolutionary Transit Worker* (RTW) supported by the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP). But the RAFA crew were founders and central leaders of New Directions right through Toussaint's election; indeed, they were instrumental in linking up with the AUD and launching a number of ND's court suits against the TWU. And the *Revolutionary Transit Worker* urged "critical support" for Toussaint in his bid for the local presidency based on nothing more than his empty rhetoric. The LRP claimed that this was necessary "to help our fellow workers become conscious of their own power and break their illusions in the betraying leaders" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Fall 2001). But their support for Toussaint served only to reinforce illusions in ND's class-collaborationist strategy. As against these opportunists, we warned at the time ("Sellouts, Traitors, Finks: No Choice in TWU Local 100 Elections," *WV* No. 746, 17 November 2000):

> "ND's stock in trade is using the courts and other government agencies as a club against its rivals, which serves only to further shackle the power of the union and place it under the thumb of the capitalist state. Such appeals to the agencies of the capitalist class enemy are proof enough why ND, despite its occasional 'militant' posture and talk of 'democracy,' offers no alternative to James."



In 1999, then-Senatorial candidate Hillary Clinton supported use of strikebreaking Taylor Law against TWU. Toussaint hosting Clinton at union meeting in 2001.

Hendrickson/Local 100 Express

For Marxists, critical support in union elections is premised on a candidate's political break with some aspect of class collaborationism. In fact, Toussaint's sellout last week was the culmination of the political program on which he ran—reliance on the capitalist state and capitalist politicians. At bottom, the RTW/LRP opportunists supported Toussaint simply because he was popular. Far from opposing anti-union court suits on principle, the LRP writes in *Proletarian Revolution* (Summer/Fall 1998): "Revolutionaries cannot absolutely rule out that there may arise exceptional and extreme situations under which using the courts in a union struggle may be necessary." As far back as the early 1970s, the LRP's predecessor organization extended critical support to Miners for Democracy candidate Arnold Miller, who was catapulted into the United Mine Workers presidency at the behest of the government and Democratic Party liberals.

Uniquely on the left, the Spartacist League opposes government intervention into the unions on principle. As we wrote after Miller's election ("Labor Department Wins Mine Workers' Election," *WV* No. 17, March 1973):

> "Going to the Labor Department to 'protect' workers' rights is inviting the class enemy into the workers' organizations. The elementary first principle of a revolutionary proletarian policy toward the trade unions is the struggle for the class independence of the workers. It is this basic consideration that underlies communist opposition to the union bureaucracy, which functions in traitorous collusion with the *class* enemy and fosters reactionary (i.e., *bourgeois*) ideology, and therefore must suppress *workers* democracy. To 'overlook' this principle in the pursuit of opportunist appetites is to cut away the very basis of communist opposition to the reformist bureaucracy!"

The starting point for a class-struggle leadership of the unions is opposition to any intervention by the capitalist state, its cops and courts. The only road to victory for our class lies in mobilizing labor's power independently of the capitalist state and the Democratic and Republican parties of capital. The working people need a party that fights for ***their*** class interests, a workers party committed to overturning this whole system of capitalist exploitation, racial oppression and imperialist war.

"The Strike Card Was Never Played"

The city's tabloids are now trying to blame the miserly contract deal for a threatened fare hike that was planned long before negotiations got seriously underway. In fact, NYC transit workers average about $10,000 a year less than MTA workers at the Long Island Railroad and Metro North. In 1996, the MTA also pleaded poverty, only to boast of a surplus of several hundred million dollars as soon as the union leadership agreed to a three-year contract extension. In response to the MTA's claims that it had gone from a hefty surplus to a massive deficit in one year, TWU marchers chanted on Monday, "Open the books, expose the crooks!" Now city comptroller William Thompson has called for an audit of the MTA, "adding that while he had long believed an audit was necessary he wanted to wait until after labor talks so as not to undermine them" (*New York Times*, 19 December 2002).

The proposed contract cooked up behind the closed doors of the Grand Hyatt Hotel stinks. "a contract long on respect—though short on hard cash," as *Newsday* (18 December 2002) gloated. The "respect" is pretty threadbare. In fact, the union leadership's capitulation in this contract battle will embolden supervisors to step up their routine victimizations on the shop floor. Fundamentally, it's not about what's on paper; the only way the workers can gain any real "respect" from the bosses is by flexing their muscle in strike action.

While most workers on sick leave will no longer have to phone their supervisor every time they step out of the house, the 30 percent of workers who use the most sick time will continue to be subject to company snooping and harassment; in effect, the union is sanctioning a category of "bad workers." This amounts to a slicker form of absence control, as workers will feel pressured to work when sick to avoid being listed. Disciplinary hearings will be streamlined and held on company time, but workers who lose will be forced to pay back the wages they got for that time on top of the other penalties, thus intimidating workers from challenging management victimization at all.

While the MTA agreed to keep the Health Benefits Trust fund that it almost bankrupted afloat—over which the union will no longer have any control—co-payments will rise and many workers will feel compelled to pay for the premium plan in order to get decent medical care. The thousand-dollar lump sum that takes the place of a first-year wage increase will not be part of the baseline for future wages and pensions and amounts to chump change after the IRS gets its cut. The 3 percent in each of the next two years barely covers inflation and will come out of the workers' hides through "productivity" increases. And as the deaths of track workers Joy Antony and Kurien Baby last month underline, *productivity kills*. Now, adding insult to injury, the MTA is giving their families an abysmal $50,000 each in blood money.

The new deal means speedup and even less safety on the job. Most significantly, the proposed contract eliminates the old no-layoffs clause, allowing management to threaten mass layoffs every time it seeks to exact a new concession from the workforce. The bosses will accelerate their drive to "broadband"—forcing workers to do jobs out of their job titles—and jobs which are currently done by crews of six will now be performed by five. The merger of the MaBSTOA bus lines in Manhattan and the Bronx with NYC Transit buses lets the company force drivers to take on added routes and creates a hornets' nest of conflicts over seniority lists and work rules that the MTA will use to pit workers against each other. This is the first step toward creating a separate "MTA Bus" company which is to eventually incorporate the city-subsidized private bus lines as well, subjecting these workers to the Taylor Law.

The contract also calls for a vast increase in the number of apprentices, creating yet another tier of workers—along with probationary and provisional workers—with lower wages and fewer job protections. The union should fight for full control over job training programs, preventing company abuse and particularly providing black, Hispanic and women workers with opportunities for advancement.

Toussaint claims this contract is the best he could do for the membership. Wall Street's mouthpieces know better: Kalikow pronounced himself "thrilled we did not have a strike," while the rabid labor-haters at the *New York Post* (17 December 2002) acknowledged that "the MTA and the governor dodged a public-relations bullet in the form of a strike." A leadership ready to defy the Taylor Law and face arrest would have ensured the election of strike committees to run the strike. But TWU members reported that no preparations had even been made for mass picketing nor was there any evidence of picket signs at union headquarters. The truth is, as Basil Paterson admitted, "The strike card was never played" (*New York Post*, 17 December 2002).

The municipal labor tops hide behind the Taylor Law to argue that you can't beat City Hall, pointing to the fines

OeMaria/NY Daily News

TWU president Mike Quill rips up anti-strike injunction on eve of victorious 1966 transit strike. TWU members at strike rally.

TWU

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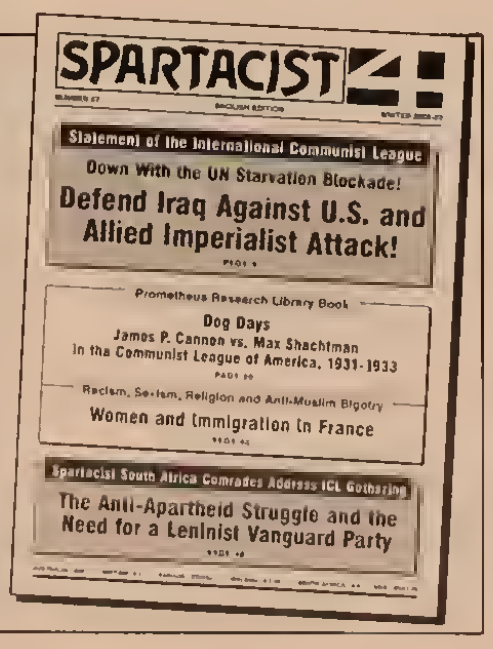

imposed on transit workers after the 1980 strike. But that strike was sold out just as it was beginning to bite. The Taylor Law's predecessor, the Condon-Wadlin Act, was literally torn to shreds when TWU leader Mike Quill defiantly ripped up a court injunction against the 1966 strike. Quill went to jail, but the strike won and the union forced the state legislature to pass an amnesty bill. Today, with a slumping economy and a viciously anti-labor administration in Washington pursuing an endless "war on terror," transit workers are in a tough situation. But if the transit union had proceeded with militancy and determination, appealing to other city unions to stand with them in struggle, it would have been possible for the union to prevail and defeat the Taylor Law.

Transit Bosses' "Plantation Justice"

For weeks, the capitalist politicians and press had denounced the transit workers as a bunch of lazy, greedy, well-off workers who were out to bankrupt the city, force up subway and bus fares and endanger the lives of the population. The anti-labor venom was wrapped in an envelope of raw racist contempt for this heavily black, Hispanic and immigrant workforce, with the *Daily News* (12 December 2002) grotesquely vituperating against "34,000 human factors who are larding up the system." Before that, the *Post* smeared the union's Trinidadian-born leader as a terrorist intent on "jihad." This is a broader expression of the MTA's "whole plantation mentality," as one transit worker told the *New York Times* (14 December 2002). Describing the MTA's demand that workers get company permission to see a doctor, he said: "It's like saying, 'Yes, master. Can I go get healthy, master?'"

The racist politicians who run this country—and their media mouthpieces—cried crocodile tears over the pain and suffering in New York City after the September 11 attacks. But the venom against the TWU is a reflection of how America's capitalist rulers regard the oppressed minorities who make up a large bulk of the working people of New York.

As seen by the cheers and waves that greeted TWU marchers on December 16, the racist anti-union propaganda didn't wash with the rest of the city's working people. They saw in the struggle of the powerful TWU a chance to strike a blow against the arrogant city rulers. By selling out the transit workers, the TWU tops sold out all the city workers. Bloomberg wasted no time in holding the TWU settlement over the heads of the other municipal unions, warning that "if you don't have productivity enhancements, you're not going to be able to get any raises."

In the context of a solid transit strike, a class-struggle leadership would have sought to galvanize the passive support for the union into active solidarity on the picket lines. The largely immigrant Taxi Drivers Alliance had already declared it would walk out in solidarity with the transit workers. Had the other unions in NYC transit, the LIRR, Metro North and PATH been brought out, the city—and Wall Street—would have come to a complete standstill. It would also have been necessary to line up the rest of city labor to join in mass pickets to prevent scab-herding and to walk out in solidarity action against arrests and other government reprisals.

But that would have meant a political struggle against the municipal labor tops, who fear to mobilize their ranks lest this upset their relationship with the capitalist politicians. Instead, Toussaint "mobilized" his fellow union bureaucrats for hot-air speechifying aimed at deflecting a strike. That the union tops share the outlook of their capitalist masters was amply demonstrated by a 9 December letter to Bloomberg by Randi Weingarten, on behalf of the Municipal Labor Committee, declaring that a transit strike "would effectively cripple our economy" and be "devastating."

WV Photo

TWU Local 100 members and other unionists formed backbone of labor/black mobilization that rode KKK out of New York on 23 October 1999.

A TWU leadership intent on winning active support among the ghetto and barrio masses would begin by organizing the WEP "workfare" cleaners—many of them women who are forced to labor for their meager welfare checks—into the union with full union wages, benefits and job protections. The union must take up the fight to defend women workers against discrimination and bigotry, demanding free, 24-hour childcare and paid maternity/paternity leave. A union fight for *free mass transit* could have ensured wide support for a strike among the minority poor and other working people, even reaching into Bloomberg's yuppie base.

What is necessary is to weld the anger of the ghettos and barrios with the social power of the labor movement. Instead, the TWU tops *undermined* support for the union among oppressed minorities. In the face of the domestic "war on terror" targeting immigrants first and foremost, only weeks before the contract deadline Local 100 official John Samuelsen complained about subcontractors employing day laborers who do not undergo background checks, ranting, "We don't know if they have a criminal background or anything about them." Rather than denouncing these largely immigrant workers, the TWU should be fighting to organize them into the union at full union wages and benefits.

The TWU tops also embraced the racist cops who terrorize the ghettos. At the City Hall rally, PBA chief Lynch was followed on the speaker's platform by a representative of the corrections officers, the sadistic prison guards who brutalize Rikers Island inmates. This was a slap in the face to every unionist who has seen the business end of a billy club while picketing, and especially to the black and Hispanic workers who make up the bulk of the municipal unions' membership and know that any one of them could have been in the shoes of Abner Louima when he was tortured or Amadou Diallo when he was gunned down in a hail of 41 bullets.

Lynch grotesquely declared, "Although my members are on that side of the barricades, their hearts and minds are with you." The cops *are* on the other side of the class barricades—they're the hired thugs of the capitalist rulers, paid to break strikes and bust heads. And that's what they would have done in the event of a transit walkout, assisted by transit security guards who, outrageously, are organized by the TWU. ***Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!***

Fight for a Workers Government!

Welcoming the capitalists' cops into a union rally is an obscene display of the union misleaders' class loyalties, which are manifested in countless other ways—from their acquiescence to binding arbitration, a weapon of the bosses to weaken and demobilize the power of labor, to their political support to the Democratic Party. Tying the unions to the parties of capital means more than just hustling votes every election day and squandering dues money that could be used to build up a strike fund. It represents an ongoing subordination of labor's class interests to those of the class enemy, as was clear in Paterson and Dinkins' role in the contract sellout. Dinkins was elected as the city's first black mayor after assuring Wall Street that "they'll take it from me." He went on to slash the municipal workforce while putting 6,000 more cops on the streets.

The allegiance of the labor bureaucracy, as well as a majority of the working class itself, to the Democratic Party is the main obstacle to successful class struggle in the U.S. It is necessary to break with the Democrats and forge a workers party. The best workers party in history was the Bolshevik Party led by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, which led the workers of Russia to power in the October Revolution of 1917. That party was composed of the vanguard layers of the proletariat and those revolutionary intellectuals who came over to the side of the workers. It steeled the working masses for the seizure of state power through political combat against the labor bureaucrats and opportunist "socialists" of the day. It was built through leading bitter strike battles and by acting as a tribune of the people in fighting for democratic rights for all the oppressed. Above all, it brought to the proletariat the consciousness of its historic task as the gravedigger of the capitalist system of wage slavery, racist oppression and imperialist war.

Those who labor must rule! In a socialist society, the wealth produced by labor, which currently goes into the coffers of the Wall Street tycoons, would be used to rebuild the decaying subway system, the schools and the hospitals; to provide free mass transit and medical care and free, quality, integrated education for all; to provide decent, affordable housing for all. But to secure all these things requires a workers revolution that overthrows the capitalist order and lays the basis for an egalitarian socialist society internationally.■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

NYC Transit Workers Vote for Strike, Get Sellout

Agins/NY Times

TWU Local 100 head Roger Toussaint embraces MTA chairman Peter Kalikow after announcement of contract sellout, December 16.

NEW YORK CITY, December 22—Marching in their thousands in freezing cold weather across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall on Monday afternoon, members of the 34,000-strong Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 demonstrated their determination to defy the city rulers' anti-strike Taylor Law injunctions. They were buoyed by the support of other city workers and minorities, who joined in the demonstration or cheered, waved and honked their car horns. They had voted to authorize the strike needed to beat back the bosses' giveback offensive. Local 100 president Roger Toussaint had ruled out the wage freeze demanded by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), vowing he would accept no zeros, and slapped down billionaire mayor Michael Bloomberg's strikebreaking rants with a well-deserved "shut up."

But when the contract expired the previous midnight, Toussaint had "stopped the clock." And he didn't even show up for the City Hall rally. Instead of what should have been a *strike rally*, marchers were confronted with a speaker's platform filled with representatives of the cops, Democratic Party politicians and backstabbing labor bureaucrats like United Federation of Teachers head Randi Weingarten, who had openly denounced a possible transit strike.

Barely an hour later, workers watched in disgust as Toussaint announced a settlement on TV giving them a big zero for the first year of the contract and sealing the deal with an embrace of MTA head Peter Kalikow. From bars near City Hall that night to maintenance shops and bus barns around the city the next morning, angry talk of a sellout was rife and notice boards featured news photos of Toussaint and Kalikow, the picture of a sweetheart deal if ever there was one.

Several days after the settlement, one TWU militant told *WV*:

> "The sentiment in the shop still seems overwhelmingly against the contract. But time works on the leadership's side, as people consider what happens if we vote it down. Can you really believe that this leadership will go back and negotiate anything better? And given the way they cynically manipulated the membership with the strike vote, it's clear these people are not going to lead a strike and challenge the Taylor Law. There have been some questions about binding arbitration, which of course in this political and economic climate would be deadly—we wouldn't do better and could do worse. A core of people feel very angry and betrayed. They soberly voted to strike and feel we needed to do so. They are bitter that we're saddled with this substandard agreement without a fight. They believe we could have struck and won."

The sellout should be voted down—not in a drawn-out, undemocratic mail ballot where the most conservative and backward union members are likely to hold sway. Workers voted to strike at mass meetings and they should demand mass meetings where they can openly debate the pros and cons of the settlement and move to immediately elect strike committees if it is rejected. But this poses the decisive question of leadership and what program that leadership fights for.

Transit workers know that the TWU has the power to shut NYC down cold, as it did in 1966 and 1980. But a transit strike would immediately confront the full might of the government, its strikebreaking laws and court injunctions, the capitalist politicians who invoke them and the cops who enforce them. The city was preparing 12,000 cops for strikebreaking duty, Governor George Pataki threatened to call out the National Guard, and every transit worker was sent a copy of a court injunction threatening severe penalties if they walked out. While Bush and his cohorts talk about imposing "democracy" in Iraq, transit workers in New York City don't have the right to strike!

WV Photo

December 16: Transit workers rally outside MTA headquarters in Brooklyn prepared to fight for decent contract. Even as thousands of TWUers and supporters marched to Manhattan's City Hall, Local 100 tops were putting finishing touches on rotten deal.

With millions being laid off and essential services from subways to schools and hospitals being cut to the bone, workers and minorities around the country were closely following the transit showdown. The attacks on workers' livelihoods come atop a bipartisan "war on terror" that has meant a racist witchhunt against Arabs and Muslims and a wholesale assault on immigrant rights and the civil liberties of the population as a whole. As the U.S. imperialists gear up for war against Iraq, they will further escalate their war on the unions in order to ensure class peace at home. A strike by this powerful municipal union in the financial center of American imperialism would have had an impact far beyond New York City.

The unions must be politically armed with a class-struggle program in such confrontations, understanding who their friends and who their enemies are: the interests of labor and capital are diametrically counterposed, and the government and the Democratic and Republican parties represent the interests of the capitalist class enemy. But the Local 100 leadership embraced as "allies" the agencies of the class enemy—the Democratic Party and the government and its cops and courts. Toussaint invited Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA) chief Patrick Lynch to address TWU rallies, even having a cozy lunch with him days before the contract deadline. And Toussaint's reliance on the Democrats was exemplified by his choice of former state senator and deputy mayor Basil Paterson as a chief negotiator for the union. And standing alongside Toussaint as he announced the sellout was former Democratic mayor David Dinkins. The union tops even formed a "Committee to Prevent a Transit Strike" to implore Bloomberg and Pataki to "negotiate in good faith." It could not be clearer that the bureaucracy's class collaboration was counterposed to preparing the membership for a strike.

New Directions: Court Suits, Class Collaboration

Toussaint rode into the Local 100 presidency two years ago at the head of the New Directions (ND) slate because many transit workers believed he would fight the MTA, unlike the discredited "old guard" around Willie James, a flunkey of TWU International president and former Local 100 chief Sonny Hall. The remnants of Hall's "old guard" in the Local 100 leadership are now mouthing cynical opposition to the contract. But on the eve of the contract expiration, they tried to split the private lines bus workers into a separate local—a move resoundingly rebuffed by these workers.

Toussaint may have sometimes "talked the talk," but he is no different than a slew of other out-of-office union "reformers" who preach "democracy" in order to get themselves into positions of power and occasionally pay lip service to "militancy" because they have not yet had the opportunity to push through a sellout contract themselves.

Braintrusted by the sinister Association for Union Democracy (AUD) and current Local 100 lawyer Arthur Schwartz, ND dragged its opponents in the union into the capitalist courts at every step up the ladder to power, including only weeks before the 1999 contract showdown (see "Association for Union Democracy: Lawyers for Government Union-Busting," *WV* No. 738, 30 June 2000). When these

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Democrats, Republicans: Enemies of Labor
For a Class-Struggle Leadership of the Unions!
For a Workers Party
to Fight for a Workers Government!

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 795 | 17 January 2003

Mass Protests in South Korea—U.S. Troops Out!

Reuters

Nordell/JB Pictures

U.S. Imperialism Hands Off North Korea!

Defend North Korea's Right to Nuclear Weapons!

JANUARY 13—In the face of Washington's diktats, as revolutionary Marxists we call on the international proletariat to stand for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state against imperialism. This crucially includes the right of North Korea to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself against the American nuclear cowboys. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, which removed a vital military counterweight to U.S. imperialism, America's rulers feel free from all constraints to strut around like the unchallenged masters of the world. Had the former Soviet Union not possessed its nuclear arsenal, the U.S. imperialists could very well have turned countries like North Korea and China—countries where capitalist rule has been overthrown—into irradiated rubble.

Last year, Bush declared that North Korea was part of an "axis of evil," and a few months later the Pentagon published a "Nuclear Posture Review" that openly targets that country along with China, Iraq and others for a potential nuclear first strike. It was patently clear that North Korea was next on U.S. imperialism's hit list after Iraq. After the Pyongyang regime pulled out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty earlier this month, demanding that Washington resume suspended shipments of fuel oil and begin talks on a "non-aggression" treaty, the London *Financial Times* (12 January) quoted a South Korean official who aptly noted: "North Korea is clearly signalling that it wants the US to address these issues now before an Iraqi war starts. The North realises that if the US succeeds in Iraq, it could confront a more aggressive US."

At the same time, we note that the Bush administration's stated intention of pursuing "peaceful diplomacy" with North Korea exposes the utter hypocrisy of its pretext for war against Iraq. While North Korea has kicked out arms inspectors and openly proclaims its right to develop

continued on page 6

West Coast Longshore Contract: Threat to Union's Future

OAKLAND—On November 23 the negotiating committee for the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) accepted a contract deal with the shipping bosses of the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). Under the guise of an attractive pay and pension package, the contract provisions continue the erosion of the hiring hall and further promote the deterioration of the ILWU from an industrial powerhouse into a craft-based, skilled labor aristocracy. Throughout the seven months of negotiations, the PMA, in league with the Bush administration, sought to cripple or destroy the West Coast dock workers union. This assault included threats to militarize the docks in the event of a strike, an 11-day employer lockout and an injunction under the union-busting Taft-Hartley Act.

From the beginning, the showdown on the docks was a concrete demonstration that the "war on terror" and war on the unions are one and the same. Well before the contract deadline last July, Homeland Security chief Thomas Ridge called ILWU International president James Spinosa, warning that a longshore strike could "threaten national security." Then in October, George W. Bush responded to the PMA's lockout of the union by forcing the longshoremen back to work under conditions dictated by the bosses. The union negotiating team agreed to the proposed contract just two weeks before the terms of Taft-Hartley would have required the union to vote on the PMA's last best offer in an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

continued on page 8

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**Break with the Democrats—
For a Workers Party!
For a Class-Struggle Union Leadership!**

Free the Detainees! No Deportations!

Feds Expand Anti-Immigrant Dragnet

In a classic Catch-22, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) threatened detention and deportation for male immigrants from Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria and Lebanon who failed to register by December 16 under the Feds' "National Security Entry-Exit Registration System." But hundreds who did were interrogated, arrested and thrown into detention centers anyway in a stark escalation of racist state repression under the rubric of the "war on terror." The government also required immigrants from Afghanistan, Algeria, North Korea and ten other countries to register by January 10; those from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan must do the same by February 21.

The initial roundups sparked protests across the U.S., with more than 3,000 people, predominantly Iranian Americans, demonstrating outside the Federal Building in Los Angeles on December 18. As we reported in "Hundreds Arrested in Racist INS Roundup in Los Angeles" (*WV* No. 794, 3 January), protesters raised placards reading "What Next? Concentration Camps?" and compared the mass roundups of Near Eastern immigrants with the internment of Japanese Americans in World War II. Reports emerged of teenagers torn from their mothers at INS centers; of prisoners strip-searched, hosed down with cold water, forced to sleep on floors or even outside; of some shipped hundreds of miles to out-of-state detention centers. While the INS eventually allowed most detainees to return home, dozens still remain in detention and face deportation. We demand: Free the detainees! Stop the deportations!

A good number of the Iranian immigrants swept up in the Southern California roundups last month were Jews, many of whom fled Iran following the 1979 "Islamic revolution." But this evoked only the mildest of objections from the Zionist Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which no doubt feels these people should have gone to Israel and not the U.S. in the first place. In a 20 December press release, the ADL called for an "investigation" into "allegations of discrimination" against the detainees. The statement made clear that "we do not question the right of the INS to investigate expired visas or other immigration law violations." To say the least. The ADL is among the most avid proponents of the roundups of Arab and Muslim immigrants in the "war on terror," which the Zionists embrace as a cover for ratcheting up the murderous repression of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. In the U.S., the ADL is in the thick of a campaign to vilify student groups and academics who have spoken out in defense of the besieged Palestinians, slandering all opponents of Zionist terror as "anti-Semitic."

The ADL's tepid protest of the treatment of Iranian Jews in the U.S. stands in stark contrast to the Zionists' rabid campaign in the 1970s and '80s to "Free Soviet Jewry," which played a front-line role in U.S. imperialism's drive to destroy the Soviet degenerated workers state. The Bush administration is rife with Zionist hawks like Pentagon aide Richard Perle and Reaganite Contragate felon Elliott Abrams who cut their political teeth in such anti-Soviet campaigns, often as acolytes of the late Democratic Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson.

The hundreds of people arrested in the dragnet since last month add to the many still in custody stemming from the roundups of at least 1,200 mainly Muslim immigrants following the criminal attack on the World Trade Center. The kind of hell they have been put through was described by Ayub Ali Khan, who was arrested along with Mohammed Jaweed Azmath while traveling by train to Texas the day after the World Trade Center attack. Seized as "terror suspects" for possessing a boxcutter and black hair dye, Khan and Azmath spent over a year in jail. Interviewed in India by the *Washington Post* (10 January), Khan told of months of "maltreatment, denial of rights, no lawyer, no court date, no respite from the solitary cell, severe incarceration in shackles and repeated questioning." At interrogation sessions, "five to six men would pull me in different directions very roughly as they asked rapid-fire questions.... Then suddenly they would brutally throw me against the wall." Even after the government acknowledged it had no evidence linking the men to 9/11, they were indicted on charges of credit card fraud and deported.

Untold numbers of such immigrants have been targeted for detention on the most spurious grounds. Shortly after the December roundups, the FBI issued a nationwide alert for five Near Eastern "terrorists" who had supposedly "infiltrated" the U.S. from Canada. Day after day, the Feds and the capitalist media stoked fears in the population of a vague but imminent danger in a transparent effort to bolster support for the increase in state repression. Last week, the Feds admitted this was a hoax perpetrated by a jailhouse tipster seeking to ingratiate himself with authorities.

Now, as the *Los Angeles Times* (5 January) reports, Attorney General John Ashcroft has initiated a massive speedup in deportations by ordering the Board of Immigration Appeals—often the court of last resort for immigrants facing deportation—to clear its backlog of 56,000 cases by March 25. The article states, "As the number of cases decided by the board has soared, so has the rate at which board members have ruled against foreigners." Noting that last October the board rejected 86 percent of appeals, up from 59 percent the year before, the article describes one board member who on one day "signed more than 50 cases—a decision nearly every ten minutes if he worked a nine-hour day without a break."

In a 22 December letter to the INS demanding an end to the racist roundups, the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, wrote that the anti-immigrant campaign "is but the domestic reflection of the imperialist war drive now targeting neocolonial Iraq. The drumbeat of brutal aggression against a more or less defenseless country reverberates in transparent assaults on the civil rights of vulnerable immigrants immediately. But the ultimate target is the rights of all, especially workers and the oppressed."

The extent to which the racist U.S. rulers can get away with trampling immigrant rights and the rights of us all will be determined by the level of class struggle. The labor movement and all opponents of imperialist war and racist repression must mobilize in defense of immigrants against the racist dragnet. Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! ■

The Struggle Against Imperialist War

TROTSKY

LENIN

The struggle against imperialist war demands a struggle for workers revolution to root out the capitalist system that breeds war. This was the central theme in a 1936 pamphlet issued by the Workers Party, then the Trotskyist organization in the U.S., and authored by James Burnham (under the pseudonym John West), a leading Trotskyist publicist before his defection from the Marxist movement in 1939-40.

The most common mistake made in the attempted struggle against war comes from the belief that this struggle is somehow "independent" of the class struggle in general, that a broad union of all sorts of persons from every social class and group can be formed around the issue of fighting war, since—so the reasoning goes—these persons may be all equally opposed to war whatever their differences on other points. In this way, war is lifted from its social base, considered apart from its causes and conditions, as if it were a mystic abstraction instead of a concrete historical institution. Acting on this belief, attempts are made to build up all kinds of permanent Peace Societies, Anti-War Organizations, Leagues Against War, etc....

War is not the cause of the troubles of society. The opposite is true. War is a symptom and result of the irreconcilable troubles and conflicts of the present form of society, that is to say, of capitalism. The only way to fight against war is to fight against the causes of war. Since the causes of war are part of the inner nature of capitalism, it follows that the only way to fight against war is to fight against capitalism.

But the only true fight against capitalism is the revolutionary struggle for workers' power. It therefore follows that the only possible struggle *against* war is the struggle *for* the workers' revolution....

To suppose, therefore, that revolutionists can work out a common "program against war" with non-revolutionists is a fatal illusion. Any organization based upon such a program is not merely powerless to prevent war; in practice it acts to promote war, both because it serves in its own way to uphold the system that breeds war, and because it diverts the attention of its members from the real fight against war. There is only *one* program against war: the program *for* revolution—the program of the revolutionary party of the workers.

—"John West" (James Burnham), *War and the Workers* (1936)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 14 January.

No. 795 **17 January 2003**

Spartacist Forums

Leninist Opposition to Imperialist War
Lessons of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement

- For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!
- Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack!
- Down With UN Starvation Blockade
- Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!

Sunday, January 26, 6 p.m.
Mount Hollywood Congregational Church
4607 Prospect Ave.
(Vermont/Sunset Red Line station)
For more information: (213) 380-8239 or e-mail slsyela@es.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, February 1, 6 p.m.
University of Chicago
5706 S. University Ave.
Reynolds Club, South Lounge
For more information: (312) 563-0441 or e-mail spartacist@iname.com

CHICAGO

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum

"War on Terror" = War on Immigrants, Workers
For Class Struggle Against Imperialist War!

Saturday, January 25, 6:30 p.m.
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street West, Room 8200
(St. George subway station)
For more information: (416) 593-4138
e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

TORONTO

Young Spartacus

ISO: On Their Knees for Anybody

The International Socialist Organization (ISO) is always willing to crucify the socialist cause upon the cross of "unity." In an article titled "The Antiwar Movement: A Great Beginning" (*International Socialist Review*, November/December 2002), the ISO argues for building the broadest possible "movement based upon uniting disparate forces" under the liberal/pacifist demands of "no war, no sanctions" against Iraq. They state that antiwar "committees should be able to embrace anyone who supports these demands, whether they are socialists who oppose U.S. imperialism in principle or Democratic Party sympathizers who believe that the UN can be a force for peace." But these ISO "socialists" do not oppose U.S. imperialism "in principle" or in practice, as is shown precisely by their eagerness to get together with imperialist agents and spokesmen like Democratic Party politicians or the United Nations.

In an apparent attempt to remain critical, the article gives the reader a history lesson, admonishing that "it's worth remembering" what happened to the antiwar coalitions during the 1991 Gulf War. In this lesson they wag their fingers sternly at the liberals of the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, stating that "in the name of building the 'broadest' movement, the Campaign insisted on demanding an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait, and pandered to organizations...that supported UN sanctions against Iraq as an 'alternative' to war." After the fact, now that a million and a half Iraqis have already been killed by those UN sanctions, the ISO grants that "unity" with anyone and everyone may not be the road to "peace." But when it counted, the ISO *endorsed the Campaign's march*, which included demands *supporting UN sanctions!* Today the ISO is again ready to build a "movement" with the enemies of workers and minorities, which can only mean blocking the development of a movement to end imperialist war the only way it can be ended —by ending the capitalist system that breeds it.

At San Francisco State University, where the ISO supports and builds a group called the Students Against War (SAW), it opposed one SAW member's proposal to adopt an explicitly anti-imperialist stance. Indeed, the ISO helped distribute a flyer calling for unity of "Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, communists...leftists, rightists...pro life, pro choice, cops...blue-collar workers, business persons...cat-lovers...." Such an appeal to cops and right-to-lifers may seem ludicrous, but the real program being pushed is no joke. During the Vietnam War, the ISO's precursors and counterparts worked overtime to corral antiwar youth into a "peace movement" alongside capitalist politicians and preachers, who *supported the aims of U.S. imperialism* but questioned whether that war was really in "America's best interests." Huge demonstrations were mobilized to listen to speeches by Democratic "doves." Finally the U.S. was driven out of Vietnam but the deep social fissures provoked by that losing imperialist adventure were contained within "the system."

Sure enough, today the ISO is reaching out to... Al Gore! So they publish a "What We Think" column in *Socialist Worker* (3 January), titled "The Dead-End Democrats," that bemoans the withdrawal of the former vice president as a presidential candidate. The ISO writes that "he was getting interesting for the first time in his political life. In early December, Al Gore announced that he wouldn't run for president in 2004." Gore, we are now told, has "newly discovered liberal positions [which] would have opened up the discussion in mainstream politics—and given ordinary people more confidence to speak up." If this ruling-class war criminal were to change his mind and run, would the ISO sloganeer for "Gore in '04"? Well, why not—in the last election, they called on people to vote for Ralph Nader, candidate of the capitalist Green Party.

WV Photo

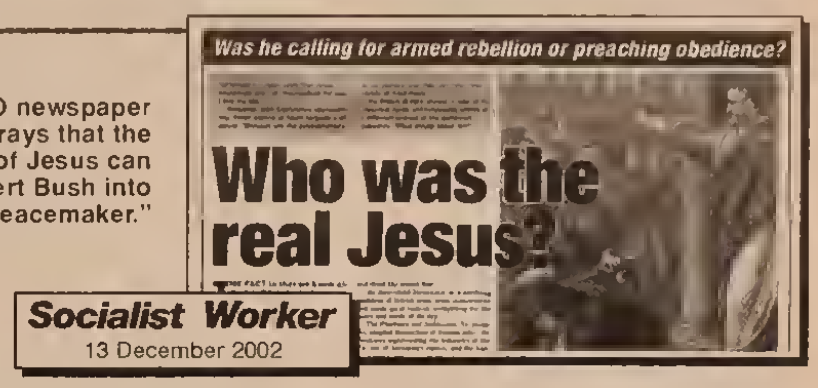
ISO at pro-Gore rally in Chicago's Daley Plaza, November 2000. Now ISO laments Gore's withdrawal from 2004 presidential race.

The ISO gives their game away with headlines like "Will the Democrats Ever Fight?" (*Socialist Worker*, 18 October 2002). The ISO wants "to put pressure on all the politicians in Washington." It's absurd to imagine that the ruling class can be "pressured" to act against its own interests! We fight for a socialist system that will defend *our* interests—the interests of the working people here at home and our class brothers and sisters oppressed by U.S. imperialism all over the world.

One demand that the ISO's supposedly all-inclusive "peace coalitions" will never include is the demand, "Defend Iraq against U.S. imperialism!" Though millions of people all over the world want to stand in solidarity with the victims of the UN starvation sanctions and the imminent American war, this demand is not "broad" by the definition of the ISO and other reformists because it would cut them off from their real hoped-for constituency, the "peace" Democrats. Of course, right now, capitalist politicians willing to make even the most timid "peace" noises are few and far between. So in the meantime, the ISO will make do with that other mainstay of "respectable" protest movements, the preachers.

Along with the ISO, the National Council of Churches (NCC) belongs to the "United for Peace" coalition. On 4 December 2002, the NCC, which represents the mainstream religious establishment in this country, took out a full-page ad in the *New York Times* begging Bush not to go to war against Iraq: "Jesus changed your heart. Now let him change your mind." Immediately, the ISO embraced the churchmen, penning an article in the 13 December issue of *Socialist Worker* to address "the perennial question, 'What would Jesus do?'" about Iraq. In the article, the ISO "exposed" George W. Bush for using Christianity and the Bible as a cover for a (surprise!) conservative agenda which includes launching a war of conquest. They wrote: "With Christmas approaching, Bush seems to have forgotten all about 'Blessed are the peacemakers' as he plans a war that will take thousands of Iraqi lives."

ISO newspaper prays that the words of Jesus can convert Bush into "peacemaker."



We'll leave it to the ISO to try to teach George Bush the true meaning of Christmas, alongside the clergymen whose main job is to preach "turn the other cheek" pacifism to the oppressed so as to leave them defenseless before their class enemy. As for us, the Spartacus Youth Clubs will continue to win young workers and students to the understanding that those who hate war must organize to take the means of production and the means of mass destruction out of the blood-drenched hands of the capitalist class, through socialist revolution. ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

CHICAGO

Tuesday, 7 p.m.

January 21: **Marxism: A Guide to Action**

University of Chicago, 5811 S. Ellis
Cobb Hall, room to be announced
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

February 1: **Marxist Economics: From the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to Communism**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail slsycla@cs.com

TORONTO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

January 29: **Defend the Palestinians! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!**

University of Toronto, Sidney Smith,
Room 2129, 100 St. George St.
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Tuesday, 5:30 p.m.

January 21: **For Class Struggle Against Imperialist War**

University of British Columbia
Student Union Building, Room 211
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail tllt@look.ca

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

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Marxism, War and the Fight For Socialist Revolution

Imperial War Museum, London

Willy Römer

Mass slaughter of first imperialist world war. Right: Revolutionary Karl Liebknecht, who raised slogan "The main enemy is at home," addresses Berlin workers, January 1919.

We publish below, slightly edited, the first part of an internal educational presentation given at a Spartacist League meeting in New York City this month by Alan Wilde, editor of Workers Vanguard.

Karl Marx's 1845 "Theses on Feuerbach" is generally considered one of the

PART ONE OF TWO

founding documents of Marxism. Feuerbach was a German materialist philosopher. In one of his works, he wrote, as an expression of his materialist outlook, that for philosophy "the truth is not that which has been thought, but that which has been not only thought, but seen, heard and felt." Marx challenged the insufficiency of such an outlook, declaring: "The philosophers have only ***interpreted*** the world, in various ways; the point is to ***change*** it."

As Marxists today, our starting point remains the same as that of Marx and Engels. And this is shown in our approach to the question of war. It is not enough to analyze and explain, as important as that may be. What we have to put forward is a program, based on material reality, to fundamentally change the nature of things, necessarily including a political/economic system that breeds imperialist war. Everything else—from our understanding of the working class as the only revolutionary force in modern society, to our understanding of the reactionary nature of capitalist imperialism, to the need to build a Marxist workers party—flows from the question of ***how*** to change the world.

CNN

1983: Current Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, then an emissary of Reagan administration, greets Saddam Hussein in Baghdad. In 1980s, U.S. imperialists armed his regime as a key ally in the Near East.

The U.S. is currently gearing up for a war with Iraq, which is all but inevitable. Some 100,000 American troops and support personnel are already assembled in the Persian Gulf region. The trepidation about war that was recently expressed by America's imperialist rivals melts away as the insatiable appetites of the world's only superpower, which outguns them all combined by orders of magnitude, confront them. The Arab regimes—venal, pathetic and bloody hacks that enforce imperialism's dictates upon their populations—only beg for a UN cover for U.S. imperialism's designs. Israel could well be planning to drive most of the Palestinians out under the cover of war.

Saddam Hussein is a dangerous man with weapons of mass destruction, says the U.S. government. Never mind that his armies are a third of what they were during the time of the 1991 Gulf War, and never mind the bloody UN sanctions that have killed more than a million and a half Iraqis and have deprived the regime of any material to upgrade its military. Never mind that all the crimes that the U.S. accuses Hussein of carrying out were carried out before the 1991 Gulf War, prior to which he was an ally of the Americans. It was the U.S. that helped provide him with biological and chemical weapons to be liberally used against the Iranians during the Iran/Iraq War in the 1980s.

Most of all, never mind the fact that no one possesses more weapons of mass destruction than the American imperialists, who have not only enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world several times over but the world's largest stockpile of biological and chemical weapons. The U.S. was the only country in the world to ever use nuclear weapons, against Japan during World War II, and it has repeatedly seriously contemplated using them, as during the Vietnamese and Korean wars. And the only thing stopping them was the Soviet Union's own nuclear arsenal which is a very good reason why we defend nuclear arms in the hands of the workers states, regardless of how badly bureaucratically deformed they may be, as in the case of North Korea. North Korea's recent actions, and the U.S.'s guarded response, underline our point that the only real measure of sovereignty left is possession of nukes. It also indicates how the post-Soviet one-superpower world is far more dangerous than what was before. With Bush now declaring the right to carry out "preemptive" strikes against any perceived enemy, not only the deformed workers states, but every tinpot capitalist dictator who doesn't want to be on the receiving end of American "liberation" will probably do everything they can to get a nuclear arsenal.

We oppose U.S. imperialism's war against semicolonial Iraq. But our opposition differs greatly from the liberal and pacifist opposition of the reformist left, which has organized mass demonstrations against the potential war. The International Socialist Organization, Workers World Party, Revolutionary Communist Party, etc. have as both their starting and finishing points simple opposition to the war. This is an expression of pacifism because what they don't express is any military solidarity with Iraq against the United States—i.e., they don't take a side. As Marxists, we understand that there is a vast difference between the pacifism of the masses—of the workers or, say, the majority of youth who come out to the antiwar protests, who are in a deformed way expressing distrust in imperialism—and bourgeois pacifism (or for that matter the pacifism promoted by fake-leftist outfits that serves to reinforce in the consciousness of workers and radical youth the political outlook of the ruling class).

As Marxists we reject pacifism because in the end, regardless of what motivates it, it can only serve to disarm workers and the oppressed in the face of a well-armed and very brutal ruling class that recognizes none of the constraints of pacifism. Today, any American war against Iraq would be reactionary, unjust and predatory. Our opposition to this war is not based on a general opposition to *all* wars. In the opening lines of *Socialism and War* (1915), written in the midst of World War I, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin underlines that Marxists must assess each war independently. Our line on particular wars is determined by our programmatic opposition to the imperialist order and our struggle in the interests of the working class internationally. That all wars are bloody and barbarous does not determine our political attitude toward them. Look at the American Civil War, the bloodiest war of the 19th century. Only the most philistine pacifists and outright racists could possibly oppose this war on the part of the North against the Southern slavocracy.

In the current conflict, the U.S. is likely to win against Iraq rather easily. But occupation of that country, with its conflicting ethnic groupings and well-developed civil society, could spark massive resistance. And regardless of how bloody, brutal or barbaric that resistance is in its methods, it would be just and defensive. Any move by Iraq to defeat or kick out the imperialist invaders is something any revolutionary would welcome wholeheartedly. Lenin addressed this very point in *Socialism and War*: "If tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just,' and 'defensive' wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory against the oppressor, slaveholding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

Revolutionary Defense of Iraq Against U.S. Attack

In a conflict between the U.S. and Iraq, we are revolutionary defensists—i.e., we have a military side with Iraq against U.S. imperialism. We want U.S. imperialism to lose and Iraq to win. There are two questions here: how and why. Certainly any military resistance by the Iraqi people to the imperialist invaders is something we'd defend. But let's look at reality here. We've noted several times in *Workers Vanguard* that Iraq hasn't the military might to defeat an American imperialist invasion. Therefore, the main weapon, the main method of defending Iraq, lies in the pursuit of the class struggle in the imperialist countries, especially the U.S.

Centrist outfits like the Internationalist

Group (IG) and Workers Power scream to "defeat" U.S. imperialism. Bear in mind that they scream mainly in cyberspace, hardly ever when intersecting workers. But be that as it may, we, too, are for the defeat of U.S. imperialism, in this particular war and generally. But you cannot just wave reality away. How do you defeat U.S. imperialism? Is that going to be the work of Iraq, on a military plane? The point that we emphasize in our polemics against the IG about hot air and empty phrasemongering is that what is disappeared or minimized in their writings is the instrumentality to bring about the defeat of U.S. imperialism, not just in a particular war on the military plane, but politically—domestically and internationally. The IG denounces our call for class struggle at home as nationally narrow and as "counterposed to the call to defeat the imperialists ***abroad***" (*Internationalist*, Fall 2001). This is in fact a position that runs counter to the ABCs of Marxism.

Capitalism, by its very exploitative nature, creates its own gravediggers in the proletariat, which alone has the social power to bring about the downfall of capitalism—by virtue of the fact that it has its hands directly on the means of production—and the objective class interests to do so. Military defeats abroad certainly help to bring about an extreme sharpening in the class contradictions of a particular country—war is the mother of revolutions. But it is fundamentally the working class that has the power to accomplish this historic task. We do not raise the call for class struggle at home with the pollyannaish belief that this particular war is going to meet its end in immediate social revolution in the U.S. We raise it in order to cut through the "national unity" mongering of the ruling class, to bring the working class to the understanding that it alone has the power to defeat the American imperialist system through workers revolution. Out of working-class and social struggle and through the intervention of revolutionary Marxists, the workers party essential for workers to take power will emerge.

Now, why do we fight for the defeat of U.S. imperialism in this and all its military adventures? Because every setback, every military defeat the U.S. encounters would serve the interests of the international working class. And in that sense, with that appraisal, we stand on fundamentally different ground than pacifism and reformism.

Our starting point is how to further the struggles of the working class internationally. A defeated or weakened U.S. imperialism would mean more room for class struggle to emerge at home. It would be accompanied by a major moral, political and economic shakeup. Weakened U.S. imperialism would mean *less* U.S. interventions against peoples of the world, as the example of U.S. imperialism's defeat in Vietnam has shown. Imagine how much good that would do the Palestinians in their struggle against Israeli occupation. It would mean more room for struggles by working people in the semicolonial world and the opportunity to build revolutionary parties in the course of sharpened struggles in such backward regions. Also, a weakened U.S. imperialism would mean that workers in Europe and Japan would not as easily perceive U.S. imperialism as the main enemy, i.e., it would cut some ground out from under appeals to their capitalist rulers to stand up to the American behemoth. And this would allow for a greater development of the class struggle there. For all these reasons, we say that the international proletariat, everywhere, has a stake in defending Iraq and siding with it against U.S. imperialism.

That's the defensism part of revolutionary defensism—now for the revolutionary part. Our defense of Iraq does not mean any support to the Hussein regime, which is savage, bloody, dictatorial and all the rest. In fact, defense of Iraq demands the sharpest political opposition to the bourgeoisie in Iraq, because it is precisely bourgeois rule that subordinates a country like Iraq to imperialism. Try to look at it from the point of view of an Iraqi Marxist. A revolutionary party in Iraq would demand and agitate for a revolutionary war to defend the country from imperialism. Such a party would demand the arming of the people, would seek to do revolutionary work in the military. It would fight for full rights for the oppressed peoples of Iraq, like the Kurds and Shi'ites, and seek to win them over to the struggle against the invaders. It would make absolutely clear that the venal Iraqi bourgeoisie in fighting the U.S. is not leading some kind of anti-imperialist struggle, but simply had a falling out with its former patron, and that the very system of capitalist imperialism means that the local bourgeoisie is tied to and subordinated to the imperialists—i.e., that so long as capitalism remains in the country, Iraq will be subjugated by foreign imperialism, regardless of the outcome of this particular war. Such a party would not lose sight for a moment of the fact that while the imperialist invaders are the main enemy, the bourgeoisie at home is also an enemy. At the same time, such a party would issue proclamations of solidarity with the international working class, especially in the U.S., in order to spur them to oppose the onslaught by the American invaders through concrete class-struggle actions.

For the Political Independence of the Working Class

Last year, the centrist League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) wrote an article on Israel where, speaking of the Arab bourgeois regimes, they declared: "The Arab masses must challenge them to put up or shut up—*send arms to the Palestinians!* The street protests in support of the intifada are vital, but they need to be joined by massive general strikes in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and the other countries of the Middle East demanding arms for the Palestinians" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Spring 2002). Now, we and LRP have fundamental differences on the Near East, but I want to address this one question because it's relevant. As a rule, it's very rare that Marxists raise positive demands on a capitalist state—demands that the capitalist state *do* something; usually we stick to negative demands—demands that the capitalist state stop doing something. The problem is that if you ask the capitalist state to do something, you might actually get it. Except that you'd get it on their terms.

If the Arab bourgeoisies were to send arms to the Palestinians, it would be to pursue their own aims, not the struggle for Palestinian self-determination. And if you call on them to send arms, then you're placing confidence in their ability and willingness to wage a fight against Zionism, becoming politically responsible for whatever outcomes such a policy might produce. This is not Marxism. It is capitulation to Arab nationalism. It simply amounts to trying to fashion capitalism—and in this case, some of the most obscene, pitiful and pro-imperialist bourgeoisies—to serve your interests. It doesn't work.

Having said all that, if Egypt or Iran or whoever were to send arms to the Palestinians—or Iraq for that matter—we would not oppose that. As explained in a 1941 article in the *Militant*, newspaper of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party: "There's a difference between not raising any objection, when a capitalist government sends aid, and *agitating* for such aid. The key to the whole question consists in the understanding that we cannot rely on bourgeois governments to aid our cause. Neither can we take any responsibility for bourgeois governmental policy." Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky addressed this point quite powerfully in his 1938 essay "Learn to Think":

> "Let us assume that rebellion breaks out tomorrow in the French colony of Algeria under the banner of national independence and that the Italian government, motivated by its own imperialist interests, prepares to send weapons to the rebels. What should the attitude of the Italian workers be in this case?... Should the Italian workers prevent the shipping of arms to the Algerians? Let any ultra-leftists dare answer this question in the affirmative. Every revolutionist, together with the Italian workers and the rebellious Algerians, would spurn such an answer with indignation. Even if a general maritime strike broke out in fascist Italy at the same time, even in this event the strikers should make an exception in favor of those ships carrying aid to the colonial slaves in revolt; otherwise they would be no more than wretched trade unionists—not proletarian revolutionists.
>
> "At the same time, the French maritime workers, even though not faced with any strike whatsoever, would be compelled to exert every effort to block the shipment of ammunition intended for use against the rebels. Only such a policy on the part of the Italian and French workers constitutes the policy of revolutionary internationalism."

AP

Kuwait: U.S. forces prepare for imperialist attack on Iraq. Revolutionaries take a side in coming war, defend semicolonial Iraq against predatory U.S.

This statement by Trotsky captures the gist of the question of revolutionary defensism: that the international proletariat must do all it can to aid the oppressed country against imperialist attack while maintaining complete political independence from the bourgeoisie.

Revolutionary Defeatism in First World War

The position of revolutionary defensism in this U.S. war against Iraq and similar wars by an imperialist or predatory power against a dependent, colonial or semicolonial country should be contrasted with the Leninist position of revolutionary defeatism worked out in the course of the First World War. When World War I erupted, it was not a surprise to most socialists. For years, there had been a mad struggle for colonies between the great powers, a mad struggle that could easily—and eventually did—spill over into a great war for colonial possessions and spheres of economic influence. Socialists recognized this before 1914, when the war broke out. In 1907, the Second International had its conference in Stuttgart, which passed a resolution on war, written in part by Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, which stated:

> "If a war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working class and of its parliamentary representatives in the countries involved, supported by the consolidating activity of the International Socialist Bureau, to exert every effort in order to prevent the outbreak of war by means they consider most effective, which naturally vary according to the accentuation of the class struggle and of the general political situation.
>
> "Should war break out none the less, it is their duty to intervene in favor of its speedy termination and to do all in their power to utilize the economic and political crisis caused by the war to rouse the people and thereby to hasten the abolition of capitalist class rule."

continued on page 11

Lenin speaking in 1918 on first anniversary of Russian Revolution. Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership successfully mobilized workers' opposition to World War I, leading socialist revolution and establishing Communist International.

Panorama

Korea...

(continued from page 1)

nuclear weaponry, some 150,000 American troops are already being deployed to wage war against Iraq, which denies possession of any nuclear or biological weapons and has allowed United Nations weapons inspectors in.

The North Korean deformed workers state emerged following the liberation of the northern half of the Korean peninsula from 35 years of Japanese colonialism. Following World War II, Korea was partitioned between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north and the Republic of Korea in the south, a capitalist police state under American military occupation. Before the outbreak of the 1950-53 Korean War, the South was swept by massive peasant revolts, and when North Korean forces moved in to reunify the country in 1950, they were greeted as liberators. In a failed attempt to destroy North Korea as well as the 1949 Chinese Revolution, U.S. imperialism devastated the peninsula in the Korean War, killing *more than three million people* and obliterating whole cities, including Pyongyang. Following Chinese military intervention, the war ended in a stalemate at the 38th parallel, and ever since the U.S. has maintained a massive military presence in the South, while North Korea has been subjected to decades of imperialist military encirclement and a starvation embargo.

Despite the rule of a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, the overthrow of capitalism in the North was a historic defeat for imperialism and a victory for the working people of Asia and the world. The existence of a planned, collectivized economy brought real advances to the working people of North Korea. Until the mid 1970s, North Korea's planned economy significantly outperformed the South, creating a modern industrial infrastructure. At the same time, the situation of a nation bifurcated by a "demilitarized zone" packed with more weaponry per square meter than any place on earth severely distorted the economy in the North. Particularly in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which provided the vast bulk of military and technological aid to North Korea, the situation became dire. In 1992, China cut off shipments of cheap oil to the North as a concession to obtain diplomatic and economic relations with South Korea. Starting in 1995, the country was hit by natural disasters producing a famine of historic proportions.

The disastrous situation in the North has been compounded by the extreme form of economic autarky pushed by the North Korean bureaucracy under the rubric of *Juche* (self-reliance). The political outlook of the bureaucracy was and is rooted in the Stalinist lie that socialism —a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—can be built in one or even half a country. This anti-working-class, nationalist dogma undermines defense of what remains of the collectivized economy and is counterposed to any perspective for international socialist revolution, and particularly to a struggle for workers revolution in the South.

Today, North Korea is ruled by a particularly cultish, nepotistic and bizarre Stalinist regime centered on "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il. The only road forward for the beleaguered working masses of the North is through the perspective of international socialist revolution. Capitalist counterrevolution can only bring even more extreme hardship and misery to the people of North Korea. Anyone who doubts that can cast a glance at the devastating statistics of life in post-Soviet Russia. By every measure of human progress—infant mortality, life expectancy, income, literacy—the diverse peoples of the former Soviet Union have been brutally hurled back. And given the present economic and industrial backwardness of North Korea, the effects of capitalist restoration there could only be far worse. What is desperately needed is the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for the ***revolutionary reunification of Korea***—for socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats in the North. The fight for revolutionary reunification must be linked to the struggle for proletarian political revolution in China and the extension of proletarian power to Japan, the industrial heartland of Asia.

A central aim of America's rulers remains the restoration of capitalism in those countries where it was overthrown —mainly China but also North Korea as well as Vietnam and Cuba. For its part, China's ruling bureaucracy has repeatedly emphasized agreement with the imperialists' demands for a "non-nuclear Korean peninsula," and has sought to lean on the Pyongyang regime to "moderate" its policies. Such criminal appeasement, denying North Korea the right to defend itself by acquiring nuclear weapons, simply emboldens the rapacious U.S. imperialists in their drive to foment counterrevolution in China itself.

Imperialist belligerence against North Korea is hardly exclusive to the Republicans. It was Democratic president Harry Truman who launched the Korean War. And it was Bill Clinton who in the midst of the 1994 Korean nuclear crisis moved stealth bombers into South Korea. As he boastfully recalled last month: "We actually drew up plans to attack North Korea and destroy their reactors, and we told them we would attack unless they ended their nuclear program" (*New York Times*, 19 December 2002).

Vitali S. Latov

North Korean capital of Pyongyang devastated by U.S. bombing during 1950-53 Korean War.

Washington rants about "weapons of mass destruction," but it was the U.S. imperialists who actually used nuclear bombs against the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. In an article titled "North Korea in the Vice" in *New Left Review* (November/December 2002), Gavan McCormack notes:

> "North Korea has few cards in its pack. The nuclear one has been its joker for at least a decade. It should be recalled that the country is well acquainted with nuclear terror, having been at its receiving end for over half a century. In the winter of 1950 General MacArthur sought permission to drop 'between thirty and fifty atomic bombs,' laying a belt of radioactive cobalt across the neck of the Korean peninsula. During the Korean War the Joint Chiefs of Staff deliberated about using the bomb, and came close to it several times. In Operation Hudson Harbour, late in 1951, a solitary B52 was dispatched to Pyongyang as if on a nuclear run, designed to cause terror—as it undoubtedly did. From 1957, the Americans kept a stockpile of nuclear weapons close to the Demilitarized Zone, designed to intimidate the then non-nuclear North. It was only withdrawn in 1991, under pressure from the South Korean peace movement; but the US continued its rehearsals for a long-range nuclear bombing strike on North Korea at least up to 1998, and probably to this very day....
>
> "North Korea knows that the world is full of nuclear hypocrisy. Non-nuclear countries bow to the prerogative of the great powers that possess the bomb, while resenting their monopoly. They recognize that entry into the 'nuclear club' paradoxically earns the respect of current club members—at the same time as it threatens annihilation for those outside."

In today's world, where the nuclear madmen in Washington declare their "right" to carry out "pre-emptive" strikes against anyone at any time, the only measure of real sovereignty left is possession of nukes. Indeed, we regret that North Korea's current facilities for nuclear development are exceedingly modest.

South Korea: Mass Protests Against U.S. Troops

Increased American belligerence toward North Korea comes in the context of unprecedented mass demonstrations in South Korea against the presence of 37,000 American troops in that country. The protests were touched off after soldiers driving an American armored personnel carrier killed two schoolgirls during a training exercise last summer, then escalated when a U.S. military court acquitted the soldiers. Hundreds of thousands gathered in Seoul and other cities in early December for the largest anti-American demonstrations in the country's history. The wave of protests formed the backdrop to that month's presidential elections, which were won by Roh Moo Hyun, who beat the U.S.-backed candidate by pledging to renegotiate South Korea's military pact with the U.S.

The substantial U.S. military presence in South Korea is not only a dagger aimed at the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states but an assertion of American interests in the region against potential rivals in Asia, chiefly Japan. It also serves as a warning to South Korea's combative union movement, threatening to drown in blood any challenge to the capitalist order. From its suppression of the "autumn harvest" rising in 1946 to orchestrating the bloody Kwangju massacre of 1980, in which some 2,000 people were killed to put down an insurrectionary revolt, the U.S. military has been a key force for counterrevolutionary repression on the peninsula.

During the Cold War, the U.S. as well as Japan aided in the rapid economic growth of South Korea as an anti-Communist bulwark against North Korea, China and the Soviet Union. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the interests of the U.S. in the peninsula have shifted. Counterrevolution in North Korea remains one of its goals, but a stronger South Korean bourgeoisie is not. When South Korea's rulers pleaded for assistance from Washington and Tokyo during the 1997 Asian financial crisis, they had the door slammed in their faces. Indeed, the door to the imperialists' elite club was slammed shut by the 1890s and not since reopened.

According to press reports, the recent wave of demonstrations in South Korea has been accompanied by a growing sympathy for the North. A *New York Times* (28 December 2002) article quoted one protester saying, "If North Korea would be threatened by the United States with nuclear weapons, North Korea can also have them." But it is vital to distinguish between solidarity with North Korea on a *class* basis—defense of the deformed workers state against South Korea and the U.S. and Japanese imperialist powers—and solidarity on the basis of Korean *nationalism*.

Much of the radical student movement in South Korea has supported the North Korean regime as the most consistent purveyor of Korean nationalism against the U.S. and Japanese imperialists. However, nationalist ideology serves to tie the potentially powerful South Korean proletariat to its own ruling class, buttressing the latter's aspirations for a united *capitalist* Korea.

The combativity of the working class has been demonstrated repeatedly, not least in the enormous struggles of the 1970s and '80s which broke the stranglehold of the CIA-sponsored, corporatist Korean Federation of Trade Unions and gave rise to independent unions, now grouped in the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). These struggles also helped put an end to open military rule in the late 1980s. But the KCTU leadership has increasingly sought to channel the militancy of the workers into support for political representatives of the rapacious South Korean bourgeoisie.

U.S. imperialist belligerence toward North Korea nearly capsized the "Sunshine Policy" of South Korean president Kim Dae Jung, whose attempts at "engaging" Pyongyang were aimed at undermining the deformed workers state through capitalist economic penetration. But Roh won the presidential election vowing to continue Kim's policy.

For their part, the North Korean Stalinists have long called for "peaceful reunification" with the South. This is a recipe for reunification on the basis of capitalist wage slavery and the annexation

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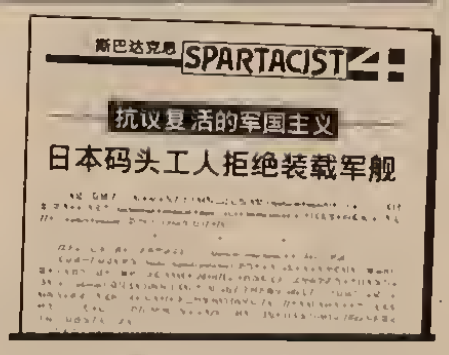

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of the North by the *chaebol*, the giant conglomerates that dominate South Korean capitalism. In an attempt to attract capital investment from South Korea and elsewhere, the Pyongyang regime is now promoting the construction of two large free-trade zones and has made other moves toward Chinese-style "market reforms." Despite continuing severe food shortages, rationing was abolished and housing rents and utility charges have been introduced. Meanwhile, Pyongyang's pleas for the U.S., Japan and other imperialist powers to adopt policies of "non-aggression" foster dangerous illusions that these imperialists can be appeased.

Western left groups like the U.S. Workers World Party (WWP) which act as cheerleaders for the North Korean regime also play into the hands of the South Korean bourgeoisie and U.S. imperialism. *Workers World* (9 January) hails the Pyongyang rulers' "skill at defending the socialist base of their society even while opening political and commercial relations with the south." Meanwhile on the ground in the U.S., WWP fosters illusions that the Democratic Party is in some way a progressive alternative to the Republicans, most recently by building platforms for Democratic politicians at rallies against Bush's threatened war on Iraq. Yet if anything, the Democrats today have a ***harder*** posture toward North Korea than Bush's Republicans. Thus Warren Christopher, former secretary of state in the Clinton administration, recently called on Bush to "step back from his fixation on attacking Iraq" because "the threats from North Korea and from international terrorism are more imminent" (*New York Times*, 31 December 2002).

Democratic Labor Party: Left Cover for Korean Nationalism

During last month's South Korean elections, various left groups in South Korea and abroad touted Kwon Young Kil's new Democratic Labor Party (DLP) as an alternative to both the traditional right wing and bourgeois liberals like Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun. In the 1997 elections, Kwon, a former KCTU leader, ran for president under the rubric "People's Victory 21." This was a class-collaborationist lash-up with various liberal groups that promoted nationalist opposition to "foreign interference" and similar rhetoric seeking to deflect class anger away from the domestic exploiters. This time, Kwon won 3.9 percent of the vote as the DLP's presidential candidate. While the DLP is based in large part on the KCTU union federation, Kwon from the outset defined it as a "party of progressives" which sought to create a "coalition of liberal forces" with groups such as the Green Party (*Joong Ang Ilbo*, 29 June 2002).

Echoing the reformist verbiage traditionally associated with West European social-democratic parties, the DLP's fundamental role is to act as a pressure group on the "liberal" wing of the South Korean bourgeoisie. Thus, Kwon saluted former president Kim Dae Jung's "Sunshine Policy," saying: "He achieved historic feats such as reducing military tension on the Korean peninsula and setting the foundation for a peace regime between the two Koreas." The DLP also cosigned a June 2002 "Solidarity Message for Peace from Korean Peace Groups" which stated that "North Korea's nuclear and missile development must be settled to build [a] peaceful Korean Peninsula." Such calls for disarmament of the North and "peaceful relations" ultimately reflect the interests of South Korea's *chaebol* bourgeoisie and its drive for capitalist reunification.

The International Socialists of South Korea (ISSK), affiliated to the late Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain, supported Kwon's 1997 candidacy and has more recently liquidated its forces into the DLP. An article on the South Korean elections in the 11 January British *Socialist Worker* (which is entirely uncritical of Roh) states: "The division of the Korean peninsula into two states is a relic of the Cold War." And the Cliffites would like nothing more than to get rid of that "relic" through "democratic" counterrevolution.

In fact, the origins of the Cliffite tendency lie in its refusal to defend the North Korean workers state against the counterrevolutionary invasion by U.S., British and other imperialist troops in 1950-53, for which it was rightly expelled from the Trotskyist movement. Under the rubric "Neither Washington nor Moscow," the Cliffites went on to embrace every conceivable CIA-backed anti-Soviet force, from Lech Walesa's Solidarność in Poland to the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* who fought the Red Army in Afghanistan to the Yeltsin-led counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself.

In South Korea, the Cliffites have long gone out of their way to make clear that they share the *chaebol* bourgeoisie's hatred for the North Korean deformed workers state. The ISSK demonstrated this in 1993 even as their own comrades were dragged off to prison under the National Security Law (see "Free Choi Il Bung and All South Korean Class War Prisoners!" *WV* No. 574, 23 April 1993). They assured the deeply anti-Communist regime that ISSK leader Choi "had not broken the National Security Law by reading banned literature from the North or belonging to a foreign organization. On the contrary, he had published books critical of regimes like North Korea" (*Socialist Worker* [U.S.], February 1993).

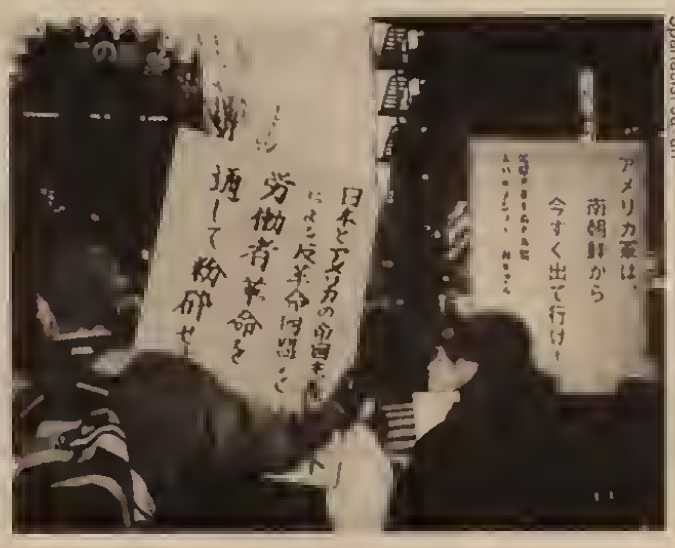
Striking a much more left posture is the British Workers Power (WP) group. While also presenting support for the DLP as a "positive development," WP calls "for the immediate withdrawal of the USA's troops and for scrapping all military treaties with it," and states that "revolutionaries should stand for the unconditional defence of North Korea. This includes its right to possess nuclear reactors and to develop nuclear weapons, if it can" (*Workers Power Global*, 22 December 2002). This principled defensist position on North Korea stands in sharp contrast to WP's refusal to defend China, whose fate is of even greater significance for the international proletariat. WP declared "Capitalist Restoration Triumphs in China" (*Workers Power*, November 2000). Despite massive inroads by overseas Chinese and imperialist capital, encouraged by the venal Stalinist bureaucracy, China remains a deformed workers state based on a collectivized economy. It must be defended against capitalist counterrevolution.

In fact, far from having a principled Trotskyist position in regard to the deformed and degenerated workers states, WP has a history of sashaying back and forth across the class line depending on the prevailing political climate and its own political appetites. With widespread popular opposition among South Korean workers and youth to the American military presence and significant sympathy for the North, WP today calls for defense of North Korea. At the time of the Soviet intervention into Afghanistan in 1979, WP took a step to the left, breaking with its Cliffite origins and acknowledging that the Soviet Union was a degenerated workers state. But in the end what was definitive for WP was the anti-Soviet political climate at home. Thus, WP simultaneously joined with the Cliffites and other social-democratic apologists for imperialism in denouncing the Soviet military intervention. By the late 1980s, WP was apologizing for anti-Soviet Baltic nationalists and touring Russian fascists in Britain. At the time of Yeltsin's pro-imperialist power grab in August 1991, WP *boasted* that one of its supporters stood on the barricades of counterrevolution outside Yeltsin's headquarters in Moscow.

Well to the right of WP's current stance on Korea is an Internet statement by the International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT) titled "South Korean Presidential Election: Vote for the DLP!! Oust Its Reformist Leadership!!" (18 December 2002). The IBT was formed two decades ago by a handful of defectors from the Spartacist tendency who couldn't stomach our hard Soviet-defensist line at the height of Ronald Reagan's Cold War II. In its lengthy treatise, the IBT nowhere calls for U.S. troops to get out of South Korea or for the right of North Korea to possess nuclear weapons!

The IBT admits that the DLP's stand for "reunification of the fatherland" would mean capitalist reunification. But this doesn't stop the IBT from giving "critical support" to a party that advocates capitalist counterrevolution. The IBT has a *pro forma* paragraph saying that reunification of Korea under capitalism "would be a defeat for the proletariat internationally" and noting that "the working class should defend North Korea against the designs of the South Korean and international bourgeoisies to plunder the deformed workers' state." At the same time, the IBT waxes eloquent about the supposed virtues of the South Korean rulers' "Sunshine Policy": "The realization of the 'Sunshine policy' would have removed a major justification for the 37,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. It would have brought about economic advantage to the North Korean regime and closer relationships between it and South Korea, Russia, Japan, China and EU member nations." Seven pages later, the IBT laconically concedes that such policies "aim to exploit Pyongyang's endemic difficulties with the object of capitalist reunification."

However, even its warnings against capitalist reunification are motivated solely by the effect it would have on workers in the capitalist South: "Workers in the South would suffer higher unemployment and suppression of wages, while at the same time bearing the social costs of capitalist reconstruction of the North." It speaks to the IBT's sneering indifference to the fate of the workers state itself that it says not a word about the devastating impact counterrevolution would have on the already impoverished North Korean working masses.



Spartacist Japan

December 31 Tokyo protest against U.S. troops in Korea. Spartacist Group Japan sign on far left reads: "Smash Counterrevolutionary Alliance Between Japanese and American Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!"

Reforge the Fourth International!

The common hostility of U.S. and Japanese imperialism to the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states does not moderate interimperialist rivalry but on the contrary serves as an arena for its intensification, as they jockey over who would get the spoils in the event of capitalist restoration. The fact that Tokyo is currently seeking to counter Washington's hellicosity toward North Korea with attempts to broker a "normalization" of relations does not mean that the Japanese bourgeoisie's approach is in any way "peaceful." This was underlined when the Japanese coast guard one year ago sank a North Korean ship in Chinese waters. While certainly not excluding military confrontation, Tokyo is today concentrating on economic penetration of North Korea. Japan is North Korea's second-largest trading partner, and Japanese capitalists are increasingly entrusting production to North Korean plants, where labor costs are low and the quality of work is high.

Reuters

Seoul: Militant rally last February in support of electrical utility workers strike against privatization threat.

The right-wing Koizumi government used North Korea's recent admission of the bizarre and senseless kidnapping of Japanese citizens years ago to whip up an atmosphere of anti-Communist, chauvinist hysteria. Revolutionaries in Japan have a special duty to defend the North Korean deformed workers state and to oppose growing Japanese militarism and the bourgeoisie's persecution of Japan's ethnic Korean minority. On December 31, our comrades of the Spartacist Group Japan (SGJ) joined with other Japanese and Korean leftists at a Tokyo demonstration against the U.S. troops in South Korea. Our comrades raised placards calling for U.S. troops out of South Korea, for the right of China and North Korea to have nuclear weapons, for the unconditional military defense of China and North Korea against Japanese imperialism, and for citizenship rights for Koreans, Chinese and all foreign workers in Japan.

Fundamentally, the defense of those states where capitalism has been overthrown requires the extension of proletarian rule to the advanced capitalist countries. Yet it is this perspective that is not only alien but anathema to the nationalist bureaucratic castes that rule in North Korea and China. The Stalinist bureaucrats in Pyongyang and Beijing fear that socialist revolution in South Korea and Japan would quickly inspire proletarian political revolutions that would result in their forced evacuation from their positions of privilege and power. Likewise, a political revolution in China or North Korea would have an enormous impact on South Korea and Japan, the industrial powerhouse of Asia.

What is needed above all is the forging of internationalist proletarian parties around the world. Our comrades of the SGJ are committed to the struggle to forge a Leninist vanguard party to lead the fight for proletarian revolution in Japan. For our part, the Spartacist League/U.S. fights to build a revolutionary workers party—part of a reforged Fourth International—that can lead the multiracial proletariat in socialist revolution to sweep away U.S. imperialism, the most dangerous force on the planet. ***U.S. troops out of South Korea now!*** ■

Longshore...

(continued from page 1)

The proposed contract was negotiated with a gun held to the union's head by a viciously right-wing government, determined at all costs to enforce labor peace as it prepares to launch war against Iraq. But the ILWU is saddled with a leadership that was predisposed to backing down from any struggle in the face of a mere water pistol. Before the fight could even begin, the leadership's allegiance to the capitalist order undermined the capacity of the union to defend itself and the livelihoods of the membership.

How was the union to combat the government's attacks, waged in the name of "national security," when its leadership had already signed on to the "war on terror," endorsing calls for increased security on the waterfront and proposing that the ILWU ranks be the policemen? The ILWU bureaucracy pledged its allegiance to the bloody aims of U.S. imperialism by promising to keep military cargo moving. How could the power of the union have been mobilized to fight the capitalists of the PMA when its leadership was mobilizing to round up votes for the capitalists of the Democratic Party? As the ranks slaved on the docks under Taft-Hartley, 30 ILWUers were dispatched across the country to campaign for a vote to the Democrats on November 5—this despite the fact that Senator Dianne Feinstein and other Democrats supported the use of Taft-Hartley against the ILWU.

PMA head Joseph Miniace was out to break the union's control over work at the ports. But it appears that the PMA and the Bush administration decided, for the time being, to reach a truce with the ILWU leadership with a contract offer that widens the gap between the ranks on the docks and the increasingly highly skilled and highly paid "steady men," who bypass the union hiring hall and report directly to their employer.

Two roads lie before the ILWU. There is the bureaucrats' program of class collaboration which has seriously undermined the union's strength and now threatens its potential destruction as an industrial union. Or there is the road of class struggle. As we wrote in the midst of the ILWU contract negotiations ("ILWU Threatened by 'National Unity' Crusade," *WV* No. 785, 9 August 2002):

> "In the midst of an economic recession and with an aggressively hostile government, the longshoremen are indeed in a tough position. But it is false to think that if you just keep your head down, they'll leave you alone. There's no hope if the union surrenders its power in advance. Every concession won by the workers took hard struggle against the bosses and their government. A prerequisite is to remove the roadblocks to class struggle, beginning by waging a political fight against the present labor leadership, which sees the world through the same lens as the ruling class and whose purpose is to ensure the subordination of the workers to the 'national interests' of the enemy class."

WV Photo

L.A. port truckers protest anti-immigrant Prop. 187, November 1994.

Restoring the ILWU as an industrial power on the West Coast docks must begin by bringing all "steady men" back to the union hiring hall, with equal pay for equal work at the highest rate of pay, and demanding a return to the six-hour day at eight hours' pay. Such steps would strengthen the union for future strike action and greatly improve safety. Essential for building up the union's strength is the fight for the unionization of the largely immigrant port truckers who are crucial to the movement of cargo in and out of the ports. Such organizing efforts, together with the fight for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, would make a critical link to the masses of black and Latino poor by opening up more union jobs. But to realize even such an elementary program for restoring the fighting strength of the longshore union requires a leadership that will fight in opposition to the aims and interests of the capitalist class enemy, its government and political parties.

The entire working class, immigrants, black people, the poor, the aged—the overwhelming majority of this society—face an all-sided assault by the obscenely wealthy U.S. rulers, aimed at further enriching themselves off the backs of labor as they squelch any resistance. But this too stokes the explosive class contradictions building up in this country. The current reactionary climate can change rapidly under the impact of the class struggle at home and imperialist war abroad. ILWU members demonstrated their capacity to struggle when in September the union stopped renewing the contract on a daily basis and began to observe safe work practices in self-defense against lethal employer speedup. In the ensuing conflicts on the docks, union members applied both ingenuity and solidarity in the face of continuous employer provocations. During the lockout, the union acted decisively to prevent the use of IAM mechanics to operate longshore equipment. But to effectively struggle against the U.S. bourgeoisie in the future means evaluating and learning the lessons of this period of confrontation with the bosses.

Defend the Hiring Hall—Recall the "Steady Men"!

The proposed settlement was brokered by federal mediators, with help from Richard Trumka, No. 2 man in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. Spinosa hailed it as "a win-win for business, labor and our national economy" (ILWU press release, 23 November 2002). On December 12 the ILWU Coast Caucus overwhelmingly endorsed the contract, over the notable opposition of delegates representing maritime clerks' locals from San Francisco northward, whose jobs are directly threatened by its provisions. Now union members are faced with a bitter choice. They can accept a contract which leaves them in a worse position to fight further encroachments by the state and the maritime bosses. Or they can vote it down. This would leave them pitted against a right-wing, labor-hating government intent on destroying any obstacle in the way of its war drive—including the ILWU—while saddled with a union leadership that acts as a junior partner of those who have declared war on the labor movement. If workers in one of the most powerful unions in the country feel they have little choice but to vote for this contract, it is a searing indictment of the labor bureaucracy, from the ILWU to the AFL-CIO.

The proposed contract's six-year term is a big concession to the employers, and the capitalists' mouthpiece, the *Wall Street Journal* (26 November 2002), made it clear that in the introduction of technology, "the ports won." The contract outlines a framework for introducing new technology that will initially eliminate a projected 400 maritime clerk positions through attrition by redefining and reorganizing their work, and by introducing computer scanning of cargo data, including from remote terminals. Future technological innovations are to be decided by arbitration. Significantly, the PMA will be able to implement such proposals over the union's objection before the arbitration stage. While for the moment only the clerk jobs are affected, these provisions set a deadly precedent for substantially reducing the longshore workforce generally. And the union has renewed the "no-strike" clause, a major barrier to the ILWU using its muscle in disputes with the PMA over technology for the next six years.

UPI

WV Photo

During 1971 strike, ILWU "progressive" Harry Bridges ordered longshoremen to load military cargo for U.S. war against Vietnam.

A whole series of new provisions in the contract proposal add up to a big pay increase for skilled equipment operators, largely steady men, while tossing a measly average annual increase of 50 cents per hour to less skilled longshoremen. It also formalizes sizable wage incentives that are paid to steady men. An unprecedented pension increase—up to $63,000 in the last year of the contract for those who can survive 35 years in this dangerous industry—is included to mollify the most senior layer of the workforce. As an additional sweetener, the PMA agreed to a modest extension of the ILWU's already good health care benefits.

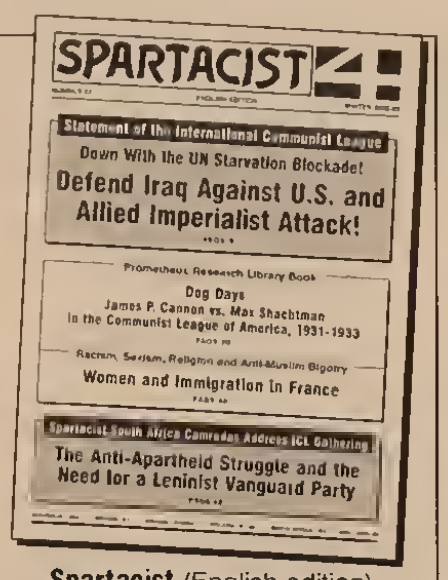
The PMA's contract offer aims to intensify craft divisions within the union, taking a major step further down a path that undermines the union hiring hall. Forged in the 1930s when work on the docks still consisted of gang labor, the hiring hall gives the ILWU a decisive say over who works, where they work and how they work on the waterfront. Historically the hiring hall prevented the bosses from pitting skilled workers against unskilled, from discriminating by race, sex or politics, and from victimizing union militants. For the PMA the hiring hall has become an anachronism with the advent of highly automated containerized shipping, but it remains the core of union power on the docks and must be consciously defended. A vivid demonstration was given last September when ILWU officials called steady men back to the hall, infuriating the PMA.

The category of steady man was created in the 1960s. Called "company men" by longshoremen, the highly paid steady men develop loyalty to the shippers and terminal operators that hire them. In contrast, some senior workers refuse to accept company offers of "steady" status and the accompanying higher wages because they understand the threat to the hiring hall.

Steady men have already become the dominant force in the longshore division of the ILWU, based on their numbers and leadership role in Los Angeles/Long Beach Local 13, which is larger than all the rest of West Coast longshore. The proposed contract gives even more pay incentives exclusively to senior longshoremen in the port of L.A./Long Beach. Such divisions between the ports undermine the historic coastwide organization of the union into a single bargaining unit, a crucial source of its power.

In 1959, under the pressure of Taft-Hartley, the workforce was divided into "A-men" and "B-men," weakening the union's integrity as an organization of all workers in the industry. The workforce is further divided by two categories of "casuals": like the B-men, they have no union status, while doing most of the same work as the registered longshoremen. With the introduction of containerization in 1961, the workforce was significantly reduced and union power concentrated in the skilled crane operators, increasingly making the ILWU a job trust. Unlike the construction trades, however, it has the highly significant peculiarity in racist America that it is made up of a large proportion of blacks and Latinos in the ports of Oakland and Los Angeles/Long Beach respectively. Despite its position as part of a true aristocracy of labor, the union's membership bridges a major fault line in American society, the racial divide, and thus provides a key link between the power of organized labor and the oppressed ghetto and barrio masses.

The pivotal position of longshoremen in the operation of the ports has enabled them to win conditions and wages placing them at the top of skilled workers



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nationally while their numbers have shrunk by a factor of ten. To the extent the union becomes the representative of only the most privileged layer, it undermines its capacity to struggle against the bosses. The union bureaucracy, however, basing itself on the most privileged, aims only to protect that job trust within capitalism, accepting its dwindling numbers as new technology is introduced. Abolish the category of steady man and trash the whole invidious tier system! No second-class union workers—get rid of the system of B-men and casuals!

One of the gains of the mass struggles that built the ILWU was a six-hour workday on the docks. Long in abeyance—due to the bureaucracy's refusal to defend it—enforcing the six-hour shift for eight hours' pay would not only make the docks a lot safer for the workers; it would create more jobs, enabling all longshoremen to get enough work. For higher manning scales to put more workers on the docks! Against the mass unemployment created by the capitalist system with its inevitable recessions and depressions, it is necessary to fight for a sliding scale of hours to divide the available work among all workers, uniting the employed and unemployed in the fight for jobs.

For Industrial Unionism—Organize the Port Truckers!

The Achilles' heel of union power on the waterfront remains the port truckers, who are not organized by any union. The lockout showed clearly that in any strike, the solidarity of the port truckers will be key to shutting down the docks if the PMA should attempt to move cargo with scab operators, whether renegade steady men, Operating Engineers or Navy personnel. Nothing moves on or off the docks without the truckers except where rail lines reach into the terminals, when the solidarity of rail workers also becomes critical.

Organizing the port truckers would enormously strengthen the power of all workers on the docks. It would also counteract the movement to turn the waterfront into a craft-union operation by organizing the entire industrial base at the ports. Most importantly, it would join together in struggle the union and immigrant workers in the face of mounting anti-immigrant attacks. But despite the much ballyhooed "tripartite alliance" of the ILWU, International Longshoremen's Association and Teamsters tops, who claimed to be organizing port truckers, the bureaucrats have not lifted a finger in this regard. On the contrary, they have rejected efforts by port truckers to join the ILWU or another union over the last decade. The labor tops regard them with utter contempt and have actively joined the witchhunt against these overwhelmingly immigrant workers who are in the gun sights of the government post-September 11.

A telling example is the ILWU tops' collaboration in writing the new Maritime Transportation Security Act (MSA), passed by both houses of Congress with no opposition and signed by Bush on November 25. Under the guise of fighting "terrorism," this law directs the Department of Transportation to develop secure areas of the ports and to limit access for anyone convicted of a felony within the last seven years, based on the government's determination of who is "a terrorism risk." This directly threatens the jobs of black and Latino longshoremen who have been on the receiving end of racist cop harassment in the so-called "war on drugs." The new law mandates the issuance of a "transportation security identification card" that will contain every port worker's photo, fingerprints, signature, driver's license number and criminal background (*Los Angeles Times*, 16 December 2002). It also calls for deterring any "transportation security incident," which specifically includes "economic disruption," a direct threat to union activity at the ports.

But instead of fighting this assault on the union, the ILWU bureaucrats signed on to the government's "security" witchhunt, with Spinosa vituperating against "unknown truck drivers" being "allowed free access to our work environment." During negotiations the ILWU misleaders repeatedly offered up their members to help police the ports, while at solidarity rallies they raised placards calling to "Fight Terrorism, Not American Workers." At the same time, the AFL-CIO tops, pitching themselves as the government's most loyal servants, sent a letter to Congress demanding that the shipping "industry giants stop being a dangerous roadblock to safety on our docks."

WV Photo

Longshoremen were at core of Oakland united-front mobilization last February in defense of immigrant rights and in opposition to repressive "anti-terror" laws.

The end result of the bureaucrats' pledge of allegiance to the "war on terror" is that now all dock workers are facing a sinister government witchhunt. To unite the workers to stop it, it is necessary to organize the port truckers. But this can only be carried out in a fight to break the unions from the bureaucracy's protectionism and anti-immigrant chauvinism, raising on the union's standard the demand for full citizenship rights for immigrants. Fighting to mobilize the ILWU against the MSA and in defense of immigrant rights last February 9 in Oakland, the call for a mass labor-centered protest issued by the Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Partisan Defense Committee declared: "We must fight against deportations, for unionizing the unorganized and for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay in order to spread the available work. Let our motto be *class* struggle—joining forces against our common enemy, the capitalist ruling class!"

Bush's recent ruling permitting Mexican truckers across the U.S. border was greeted with howls of outrage by many officials in AFL-CIO unions. The trade on which the longshoremen depend for their work is by its very nature international. In any showdown with the bosses, longshoremen rely on the support of their international counterparts. For U.S. unions to align with the rapacious U.S. ruling class in "national unity" against foreign workers creates a fundamental obstacle to such solidarity. Instead labor must be mobilized in concrete actions of proletarian internationalism in the fight for the unionization of all dock and transport workers so that work is performed by union labor at union scale, no matter where; only union hands should touch any container from the point of loading to the point of discharge.

The Portworkers Solidarity Committee (PWSC), a group of union supporters including self-proclaimed socialist organizations convened by a more left-talking wing of the Bay Area Local 10 bureaucracy, has made a pretense of defending immigrant rights and opposing the U.S. war moves against Iraq. But the overwhelming majority of the work of the PWSC consisted of building "solidarity rallies" that provided an uncritical platform for the bureaucracy to spout its flag-waving patriotism and stump for the Democratic Party. This only serves to give a left cover to the bureaucracy's program of support to "national unity," in which they try to sell to the workers the lie that they have interests in common with the U.S. rulers.

The International Socialist Organization (ISO), which was a central organizer of the PWSC, aims to promote a more "militant" wing of the bureaucracy. The 10 January issue of the ISO's *Socialist Worker* prints a statement by ILWU Local 10 business agent Jack Heyman demanding that "longshore workers should reject this contract and send our negotiating committee back." Some alternative!! This putative oppositionist can summon up nothing more than sending back the very bureaucrats he postures at denouncing for "acquiescing to government intimidation."

In this article, Heyman invokes the "principled legacy" of the ILWU in opposing reactionary government policies domestically and internationally. A whole wing of the ILWU bureaucracy was schooled in the "progressive" tradition of the Harry Bridges leadership, which was forged in the crucible of the Communist Party's popular front with Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" Democrats. These bureaucrats sometimes talk left, professing solidarity with the world's oppressed. But since they don't mobilize the membership in action, this amounts to little more than a distraction to keep the ranks busy while the tops conduct business unionism as usual.

Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!

All wings of the ILWU bureaucracy and their reformist tails expressed dismay that the government was "colluding" with the PMA. But in this capitalist system the government exists to enforce the bosses' interests against the working class here and to defend the capitalist rulers' interests abroad. Karl Marx described the government as the executive committee of the capitalist class, and the first step in any workers struggle must be a sharp break with the capitalist government and its parties.

The situation facing the ILWU today is a stark example of what Leon Trotsky, one of the central leaders of the Russian Revolution, observed more than 60 years ago:

> "The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."
>
> —"Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (1940)

Unionized workers are now down to some 13 percent of the workforce. Without a renewal of the labor movement, American workers are facing a return to the brutal conditions of the 1920s, before the great labor struggles that led to industrial union organization. But even the simple question of organizing the unorganized across the country requires taking the struggle off the narrow terrain of trade unionism. The very fact that the U.S. South remains a bastion of the "open shop" is testimony that any organizing effort requires a battle for black rights. This would immediately pose the need to break with the Democratic and Republican parties of racist American capitalism.

The savage attacks on the living standards of the working class and on the very ability of the poor and helpless to live, the slashing of health care at all levels, the empty futures of youth for whom there is little education and few jobs and the rampant racist attacks are no less the product of the bureaucracy's class-collaborationist policies that have sapped the organized strength of the unions. Armed with a class-struggle program, a union with the power of the ILWU could spearhead a fight against these ravages and begin to turn the tables on the bosses.

The catastrophe of joblessness, threatening the disintegration of the working class, can be done away with—but not without getting rid of production for profit. It is necessary to fight for a workers government, where the means of production have been taken away from the capitalists and made the collective property of the working class. Under such conditions, labor-saving technology would mean less time at work and a vast improvement in conditions of life for the population as a whole.

The road forward requires a political struggle against the labor misleaders and the forging of a new leadership that will fight to mobilize union power independently of the bosses' government and their parties. Such struggles are necessary to construct a revolutionary workers party that will be the champion of all the exploited and oppressed against the bloody U.S. capitalist class, the enemy of the world's peoples. We seek to build such an organization, as a section of an international party, which can seize power and overturn the decaying capitalist system so that those who labor will rule.■

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Iraq...

(continued from page 12)

who is running for president in opposition to an Iraq war, these liberal Democratic Party politicians seek to position themselves to get ahead of and contain the increasing discontents that the capitalist rulers' war at home and abroad will generate among working people and minorities. It is small wonder that the majority of these politicians are black Democrats who are more attuned to the fact that there is enormous anger and disaffection particularly among black people and the poor.

The January 18 demonstrations are scheduled for the weekend of Martin Luther King Day. The protest organizers invoke the legacy of Martin Luther King to draw the link between the fight against racial oppression at home and war abroad in order to promote liberal opposition to war. To be sure, there is an inextricable link between the two. Just look around. From the get-go, the "war on terror" has been brought home in a racist witchhunt against immigrants, primarily Muslims and Arabs. And as the U.S. amasses forces for war against Iraq abroad, it is rounding up male immigrants over the age of 16 from 20 different countries while threatening Iraqi Americans and Iraqis in the U.S. with mass incarceration.

The fight against imperialist war cannot be divorced from the struggles of working people and minorities against all manifestations of capitalist oppression. The multiracial working people of America and the semicolonial masses of Iraq have a common enemy in the exceptionally war-crazed, labor-hating gang in the White House and the capitalist class it represents. America's colossal military advantage over Iraq underscores the importance of class struggle in the imperialist centers as a chief means to defend Iraq. We look to the example of the Japanese dock workers in Saseho, who refused to handle Japanese military goods destined for use in the war against Afghanistan in the fall of 2001. But the aim of the demo organizers is not to promote a class-struggle defense of immigrant rights and opposition to imperialist war, but rather to promote the idea that positive social change can come through liberal Democrats.

AFP

Israeli military terrorizes West Bank town of Nablus. U.S.-led "war on terror" has given Zionists green light to intensify murderous repression of Palestinians.

An ANSWER leaflet for the upcoming rally declares that King "believed it was impossible to wage a war on racism and poverty at home while waging a racist war against poor people in Vietnam." The U.S. ruling class never had the intention of waging a "war on racism and poverty," then or today. While King was hounded by the Feds and assassinated for being a symbol of the struggle for black equality, his political role was to keep the civil rights movement firmly tied to the racist Democratic Party of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Another ANSWER leaflet for the January 18 protests argues: "Like Dr. King did during the Vietnam War, we will demand that hundreds of billions of dollars be spent on jobs, education, housing, healthcare and to meet human needs—not for wars of aggression in the Third World." In case these reformist idiots haven't noticed, the U.S. capitalists have acquired their untold billions of dollars through the exploitation of labor and the immiseration of the oppressed. If you want to get your hands on the money, you have to break the power of the bourgeoisie and place the means of production in the hands of those whose labor creates the wealth of society.

LRP: "United Front" with Imperialist Liberals

Neither WWP/ANSWER nor any of the other reformist groups endorsing these protests raises the necessary call for the defense of Iraq against U.S. attack because to do so would mean antagonizing Democratic Party liberals. The centrist League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) strikes an oppositional posture, declaring: "We stand for the defeat of imperialism and the defense of the Iraqi people in any war against the imperialist powers" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Fall 2002). The LRP article also polemicizes against WWP/ANSWER for "pushing the liberal imperialist line" and providing a platform for the Democrats. However, we can't help but note that the LRP's defense of Iraq and calls to defeat imperialism are buried within an article that at bottom promotes the same class-collaborationist unity pushed by the reformist groups it attacks:

> "The task of genuine revolutionaries is not just to 'build the movement,' although we are of course in favor of the largest and strongest anti-war protests possible. We need also to fight for them to be built as genuine united fronts, where all voices are heard, including that of revolutionaries—not just those who support the Democrats and other pro-imperialist liberals. We also fight within the movement for revolutionary proletarian leadership, so that it points to a lasting challenge to capitalist attacks and imperialist war."

By its own admission, the LRP promotes an alliance with the class enemy—"Democrats and other pro-imperialist liberals." The idea of building a "revolutionary proletarian leadership" out of such a cabal is downright absurd; however, it is a measure of the opportunist impulses that animate the LRP. There cannot be a common movement and a common program against imperialist war with representatives of the very capitalist class in whose interests such wars are waged. To attempt to do so can only mean subordinating the working class, the only force that can actually defeat imperialism, to the interests of its capitalist exploiters.

In contrast, revolutionaries seek to break the disastrous unity of antiwar militants with the most deceptive wing of the bourgeoisie and replace it with a working-class unity—a unity based on a program of international class struggle. As V.I. Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik Party which led the only successful antiwar movement in history by overthrowing the rule of capitalist imperialism in Russia at the height of World War I, explained in *Socialism and War* (1915):

> "To rally these Marxist elements, however small their numbers may be at the outset; to reanimate, in their name, the now forgotten ideals of genuine socialism, and to call upon the workers of all lands to break with the chauvinists and rally about the old banner of Marxism—such is the task of the day."

The LRP's professed "stand for the defeat of imperialism" is a manifest fraud considering that this organization capitulated to the imperialists down the line in their drive to destroy the Soviet Union. Although bureaucratically degenerated, the USSR was a workers state, based on collectivized property forms which represented real gains for the working class internationally. It was the elementary duty of revolutionaries to unconditionally militarily defend the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, as it is necessary today to defend the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states—China, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea. But the LRP howled along with the imperialist wolves in opposing the Soviet military intervention against the CIA-backed woman-hating Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan in the 1980s and stood with the counterrevolutionary forces headed by Boris Yeltsin that destroyed the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92.

Asahi Shimbun

Ronald Haeberle

U.S. imperialism's trail of mass terror: A-bombing of Japanese city of Hiroshima, 1945; massacre of Vietnamese villagers in My Lai, 1968.

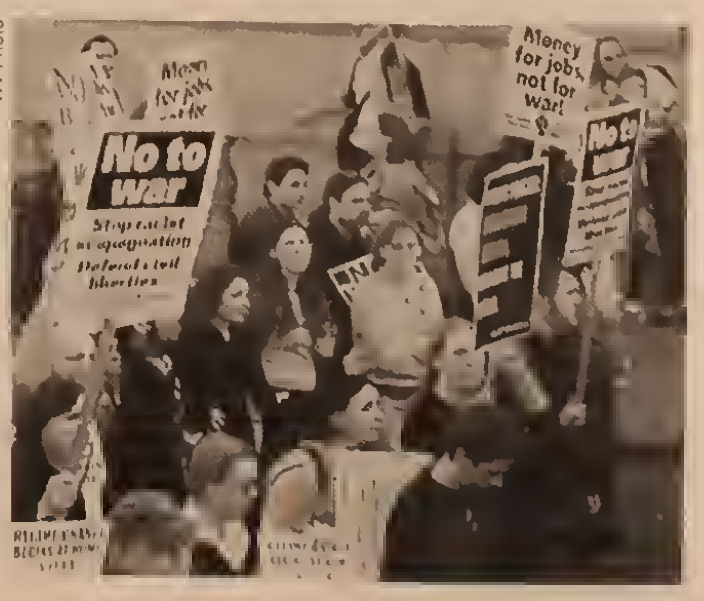
IG: Empty Bombast, Opportunist Practice

Another group that claims to stand apart from the reformist swamp is the centrist Internationalist Group (IG), which raises the call "Defeat U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!" (*Internationalist*, September-October 2002). At the time of the U.S. military adventure in Afghanistan over a year ago, the IG loudly and indignantly took us to task for supposedly "flinching" in the face of jingoist warmongering because we did not emblazon "Defeat U.S. Imperialism!" across the front page of *Workers Vanguard*. They attacked our slogan, "For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!" writing in the *Internationalist* (Fall 2001) that "the emphasis on 'at home' is counterposed to the call to defeat the imperialists ***abroad***" and claiming that our line "amounts to ***nationalist, economist social pacifism***." But these days, the IG itself seems to have fallen into "economist social pacifism," writing in its current issue: "Our call for defeat of the imperialists means class struggle at home."

But this is all just cynical wordplay. As we noted at the time of the U.S. war against Afghanistan ("No to Bosses' 'National Unity'! For Class Struggle at Home!" *WV* No. 768, 9 November 2001):

> "At bottom, the IG deliberately muddles the question of a military defeat in a particular war with the proletarian defeat of one's bourgeoisie through socialist revolution. The latter is the program animating any truly revolutionary party in peacetime as in wartime. The slogans used to proceed toward that end—to lead the working masses from their current level of consciousness to the seizure of state power—are, however, necessarily conjunctural. Thus, upon returning to Russia after the overthrow of the tsar in early 1917, Lenin had to fight against those in the Bolshevik Party who wished to lend support to the bourgeois Provisional Government. Having won this battle, he then had to caution left proletarian elements of the party who wanted to immediately call for the overthrow of the Provisional Government. On 5 May 1917, the Central Committee passed the following motion authored by Lenin: 'The slogan "Down with the Provisional Government!" is an incorrect one at the present moment because, in the absence of a solid (i.e., a class-conscious and organised) majority of the people on the side of the revolutionary proletariat such a slogan is either an empty phrase, or, objectively, amounts to attempts of an adventurist character'."

And the IG's phrasemongering is of the most empty sort—fraudulent bombast which they peddle to impress the unwary in cyberspace while on the ground they practice pure opportunist



WV Photo

San Francisco, October 26: Reformist ISO seeks "unity" with liberal imperialist politicians to pressure U.S. rulers for "peace."

Marxism, War...

(continued from page 5)

Comrades know of the historic betrayal of the Second International, when nearly every section supported its own imperialist rulers in the war. This betrayal first emerged on 4 August 1914, when the entire parliamentary fraction of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) voted for war credits so that the rulers could finance their war. The vote for war credits by the SPD marked a fundamental betrayal of Marxism. The SPD helped to push the international proletariat into the slaughterhouse. In her wartime pamphlet titled *The Crisis in the German Social Democracy*, but better known as the *Junius Pamphlet* since it was written under the pseudonym of Junius, Rosa Luxemburg powerfully described how the war showed the true nature of capitalism, ripping apart all the hypocrisy that imperialism uses to pursue its aims:

> "Shamed, dishonored, wading in blood and dripping with filth—thus stands bourgeois society. And so it is. Not as we usually see it, pretty and chaste, playing the roles of peace and righteousness, of order, of philosophy, ethics and culture. It shows itself in its true, naked form—as a roaring beast, as an orgy of anarchy, as a pestilential breath, devastating culture and humanity."

Right after the war credits vote, Lenin declared the Second International dead; Luxemburg characterized it as a "stinking corpse." And it was in this period that the policy of revolutionary defeatism was advanced. This was a reactionary war on every side, a gruesome fight by big and little imperialist powers over how many countries and peoples they would hold as slaves. Marxists had no side in this war, and in fact, the defeat of one's own bourgeoisie was the lesser evil. The aim was to turn this imperialist war into a civil war between the exploited class, the proletariat, and the warmongering exploiters, the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Palestinians under guns of Israeli troops in Ramallah, West Bank.

But there is an interesting point to note here. Working for the defeat of your own imperialists did not mean advocating the victory of the other side. The position of revolutionary defeatism was to be taken up by the working classes in all the belligerent countries—i.e., they were all supposed to work for the defeat of their rulers. And this was in fact a point of polemic between Trotsky, who occupied a centrist position at the time, and Lenin. Trotsky claimed that Lenin's position—that the defeat of the Russian imperialists was the lesser evil—amounted to social-patriotism toward Germany. Lenin replied in a July 1915 article titled "The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War":

> "The phrase-bandying Trotsky has completely lost his bearings on a simple issue. It seems to him that to desire Russia's defeat *means* desiring the victory of Germany.... To help people that are unable to think for themselves, the Berne resolution...made it clear that in *all* imperialist countries the proletariat must now desire the defeat of its own governments....
> "What is the substitute proposed for the defeat slogan? It is that of 'neither victory nor defeat'.... This, however, is nothing but a paraphrase of the '*defence of the fatherland*' slogan. It means shifting the issue to the level of a war between governments (who, according to the content of this slogan, are to *keep* to their old stand, 'retain their positions'), and not to the level of the *struggle* of the oppressed classes against their governments! It means justifying the chauvinism of *all* the imperialist nations, whose bourgeoisie are always ready to say—*and do say to the people*—that they are 'only' fighting 'against defeat'."

The German revolutionary Karl Liebknecht's slogan "The Main Enemy Is at Home" provided a powerful and popular distillation of revolutionary defeatism. It was broadcast to all the workers of the belligerent countries, not only those of Germany. It was a recognition that to the German workers, for example, the French imperialists, the Russian imperialists, etc. were enemies, but that the main enemy was German imperialism. It was a call to turn the imperialist war into a civil war against the ruling classes who were pushing millions of young workers into an unprecedented slaughter.

The "main enemy" slogan is a popular expression of revolutionary defeatism, which in a nutshell applies when a war is reactionary on all sides. So, in contrast, as I've already stated, the U.S.-led war on Iraq would be just and defensive on the part of Iraq—we therefore have a side. But wars like World War I, for example, are simply over division and redivision of imperialist booty and are reactionary on all sides. Likewise, regional wars like the Iran/Iraq War or the Arab/Israeli wars of 1967 and '73, where none of the combatants were imperialist powers, are also reactionary on all sides because neither side's victory could possibly bring about an advance in the position of the proletariat, either internationally or in these particular countries. Hence, we adopt a revolutionary defeatist position in such wars as well, fighting for the defeat of all the belligerent countries through proletarian seizure of power.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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accommodation. For example, on paper the IG claims to share our position hailing the Soviet Red Army intervention into Afghanistan in the 1980s. But at an IG-initiated united-front protest at New York City's Hunter College in November 2001 against the anti-immigrant witchhunt accompanying the U.S. war against Afghanistan, not one of the IG's placards, not one of their speakers and none of the propaganda they produced for the protest said a word about the Red Army or defense of the Soviet Union. In his speech to the protest, IG leader Jan Norden made no mention of the Red Army intervention, only declaring lamely: "We fought against the Taliban, we fought against the Islamic fundamentalists when the United States was pushing them." The IG did not want to offend those, like the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the LRP or the Revolutionary Communist Party who had endorsed and attended the rally and who to a man were on the imperialists' side against the Red Army in Afghanistan.

The IG's utter silence in front of the crowd of several hundred people at Hunter on the force that could have defeated the U.S.-backed reactionaries in Afghanistan—the Soviet Red Army—demonstrates that its oh-so-revolutionary calls for the defeat of U.S. imperialism are so much hot air. When they produced a 32-page IG pamphlet (December 2001) devoted to the Hunter protest, the IG went so far as to edit out any reference to the Soviet intervention in the SL speech at the rally and completely eliminated any mention of the SYC speaker, who had said:

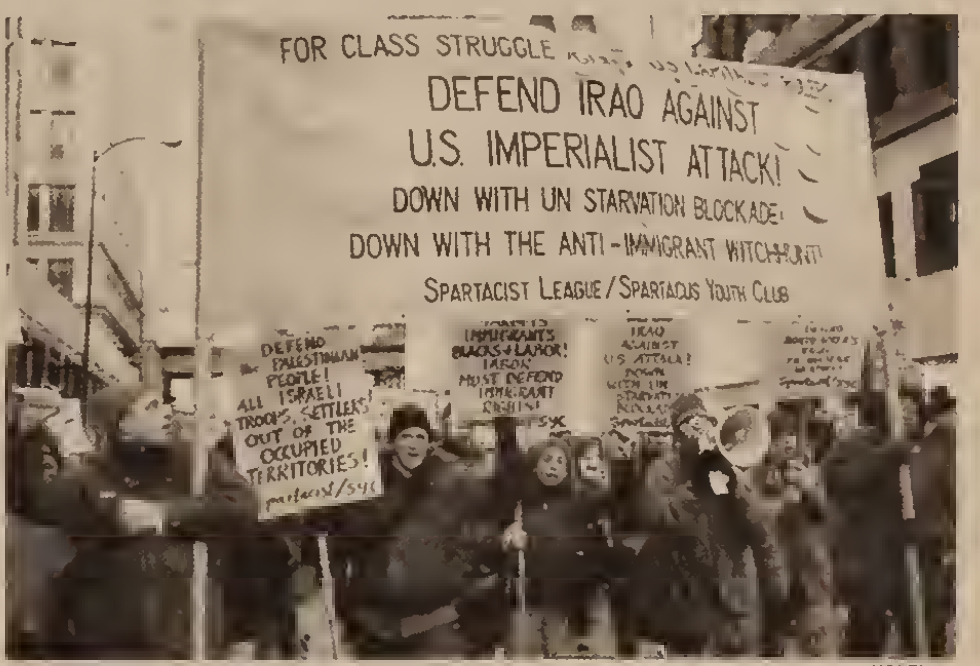
> "All of the left groups now talk about how the U.S. armed and funded the *mujahedin* against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the '80s. But what they don't say is that they all capitulated to the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive, with, for example, the ISO hailing the *mujahedin* as 'freedom fighters.' Only we Trotskyists said: 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!'"

Lessons of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement

An understanding of the dearly bought lessons of the past is crucial to the consciousness that is necessary if the proletariat is to be mobilized in the struggle to shatter the rule of capitalist imperialism. The reformists wilfully falsify those lessons in order to peddle their opportunist wares to a new generation of fighters. Thus, Socialist Action leader Jeff Mackler holds up as a model the single-issue campaign organized by the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) during the Vietnam War to "Bring the troops home now!" (*Socialist Action*, November 2002).

Mackler himself was prominent in the ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party which at the time dominated NPAC. Limiting the protests to pacifist demands to bring the troops home, NPAC explicitly appealed to (and succeeded in drawing in) liberal Democratic Party politicians who sought to extricate American imperialism from this *losing* colonial war and to head off a challenge to the capitalist order at home. To ensure that NPAC demonstrations remained "peaceful, legal," i.e., safe for liberal imperialist politicians, the SWP policed the movement and at times bloodily attacked those who solidarized with the Vietnamese revolutionary fighters or opposed allying with the Democrats. In his article, Mackler continues to take aim at those "who insist that more militant tactics are required to stop the war machine," arguing that such militancy is counterposed to building a "mass movement."

The effect of NPAC was to deflect antiwar youth back into the confines of bourgeois electoral politics, and it played a key role in defusing enormous opportunities for struggle against the capitalist order. By the late 1960s and early '70s, the ghettos had been erupting in upheaval for a number of years; workers had begun staging a number of militant strikes, some in defiance of both the government and the labor bureaucracy; and the heavily black and working-class GIs in Vietnam were in a semi-mutinous state. The National Guardsmen who shot down four antiwar protesters at Kent State in the spring of 1970 had just come from a strikebreaking mission against the Teamsters, who at the time were engaged in a huge national wildcat strike. But in subordinating opposition to the war to political representatives of the class enemy, NPAC's class-collaborationist "antiwar" movement was counterposed to a revolutionary mobilization of the workers.



WV Photo

Chicago, January 11: Contingent built by SL/SYC marches at antiwar protest.

What brought an end to the Vietnam War was not NPAC's peace crawls or even the more militant civil disobedience protests. Rather it was the battlefield victory of the Vietnamese workers and peasants, who were fighting not only to expel the American invaders but for a social revolution against the capitalist order. We called for military victory to the North Vietnamese deformed workers state and the South Vietnamese revolutionary fighters and raised the slogan "All Indochina Must Go Communist!"

The Spartacist League fought to win radical antiwar activists to the proletarian struggle. In an October 1967 leaflet titled "From Protest to Power," we explained:

> "A political movement built solely around the war is incapable of unifying the various forces of discontent within American society. On the contrary, the necessary support given to the suppression of the American working class by establishment 'doves'—[antiwar Senator] Wayne Morse is a leading Congressional advocate of government strike-breaking while the liberal establishment, including King, unanimously supported the bloody suppression of the ghetto risings—is a major obstacle to building a mass anti-war movement....
> "The anti-war movement can force Johnson to withdraw U.S. troops only if he is more afraid of it than of the victory of the Vietnamese Revolution. No demonstration, however effective and militant, can do this. Only a movement capable of taking state power can. The anti-war movement has no future except as a force for building a party of revolutionary change."

Today, as well, we fight to break the ideological chains that bind the working people, oppressed minorities and radicalized youth to the "lesser evil" Democratic Party of American imperialism. The central task remains the forging of a revolutionary workers party to lead the workers to power. Only by wresting the means of production from the hands of the capitalist imperialist rulers and creating an international planned economy can the needs of the billions of toilers now consigned to hideous poverty begin to be met and the threat of war ended once and for all. ***Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack!*** ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Don't Crawl for the Democrats— The Other Party of Racism and War

U.S. Navy

AFP

Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack!

U.S. imperialists are rapidly building up for devastating war against Iraq. Top right: Victim of U.S. bombing raid in Baghdad, 1999.

JANUARY 13—After weeks of storming into Iraqi government and industrial facilities, Hans Blix and his team of United Nations imperialist "inspectors" (spies) concede that they have found no evidence of "weapons of mass destruction." But it doesn't really matter in any case. The U.S. imperialists have already dispatched an invasion force of over 100,000 troops to the Persian Gulf region, with Britain deploying 20,000 more. These inspections are nothing but a pretext for war. Indeed, as demonstrated by the U.S.'s response to North Korea's announcement that it is reactivating its nuclear weapons program, it is the very fact that Iraq has no such capability that emboldens the U.S. for war.

For all their talk that any war with Iraq have UN sanction, the French imperialists have already dispatched warships to the Gulf. The Social Democratic government of Gerhard Schröder in Germany, which won re-election on the basis of opposition to a war against Iraq, is now mooting that no second UN resolution is necessary before an attack is launched. At the same time, there is massive opposition throughout West Europe to the impending war. Even in Britain, where Tony Blair's Labour government has operated as a mouthpiece for the Bush White House, there have been antiwar demonstrations of hundreds of thousands. Last week, a shipment of military goods bound for the Gulf was halted when railway workers refused to move the freight train carrying it.

We stand for the military defense of semicolonial Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack. This entails no political support to the regime of Saddam Hussein, the bloody butcher of Iraqi workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims, Kurds and others. As such, he was a close ally and client of U.S. imperialism for two decades before he made a grab for Kuwait in 1990. Now the U.S. wants a more pliant regime and tighter control of the oil spigot, not least to put economic rivals like Japan and Germany, who are more dependent on Near East oil, on rations.

It is the height of cynicism that the world's bloodiest power with the greatest arsenal of nuclear weapons claims to be going to war to rid Iraq of "weapons of mass destruction." Even a dairy facility or pharmaceutical plant can be targeted as a potential facility for the production of chemical and biological weapons, as can water purification systems using chlorine. In short, this is a program for the obliteration of all industry and infrastructure in the country. Indeed, much of Iraq's sewage and water treatment systems have already been devastated by American bombing. And one of the first targets of U.S. bombers in 1991 was a baby formula factory that the Americans claimed was a biological weapons facility.

Tens of thousands of Iraqis were killed in the 1991 Gulf War, and more than 1.5 million have been killed since through the UN starvation sanctions. A recent report released by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War estimates that as many as a quarter of a million people could be killed in the course of the coming war. Meanwhile, the Israeli government of Ariel Sharon—with jet fighters and helicopter gunships supplied by American imperialism—has used the U.S.-led "war on terror" to escalate its murderous onslaught against the Palestinian people, which could increase to cataclysmic proportions under cover of a U.S. war with Iraq. *Down with the U.S./Israel axis of terror! Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories!*

Anti-Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle at Home!

The patriotic "one nation indivisible" hysteria whipped up following the criminal attack on the World Trade Center has grown thin under the weight of recession, mass layoffs and grotesque corporate corruption. And the country at large is far from united behind the war on Iraq. On January 11, 30,000 or more antiwar protesters marched in Los Angeles and many tens of thousands more are expected to turn out for nationwide protests on January 18 to demand "No War on Iraq!" The October 26 demonstrations in Washington, D.C., San Francisco and other cities drew up to 250,000 people. The Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Clubs built Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents in D.C. and San Francisco around the slogans: "For Class Struggle Against the U.S. Capitalist Rulers! Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack! Down With the UN Starvation Blockade!" Against Workers World Party (WWP) and its International ANSWER Coalition, organizers of these demonstrations, our contingent mobilizing call stressed (*WV* No. 789, 18 October 2002):

> "They are mobilizing on the basis of opposition to a war on Iraq, but as the call for the demonstration makes clear, their activities are consciously aimed at enlisting a wing of the capitalist rulers—primarily Democratic Party politicians—to struggle for a more 'humane' imperialist capitalism.... It is futile to oppose war against Iraq but not oppose the economic system which generates war and the ideology that legitimizes it. Moreover, pushing illusions in the reformability of the bloody American imperialist state can only result in the *demobilization* of the only force in capitalist society that can challenge the rule of the capitalist class: the working class."

The October 26 demos provided a platform for an array of "antiwar" Democrats like Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton and Cynthia McKinney. Like Barbara Lee, who cast the sole vote in Congress against giving the Bush administration a blank check for war in Afghanistan, and Al Sharpton,

continued on page 10

Down With UN Starvation Blockade!
For Class Struggle Against U.S. Imperialist Rulers!
Down With Anti-Immigrant Dragnet!

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 796

31 January 2003

Fight U.S. Imperialism Through Class Struggle at Home!

Defend Iraq!

WV Photo

Our banner at January 18 antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C. stood out sharply against pro-Democratic Party liberal pacifism of protest organizers.

JANUARY 28—The January 18 protests in Washington, San Francisco and other U.S. cities were the largest antiwar demonstrations in this country since the Vietnam War. Within the population at large, support for an invasion of Iraq is at best lukewarm, and polls indicate a growing majority oppose a unilateral U.S. attack. In Europe, hundreds of thousands have marched in protest against the evident intent of U.S. imperialism and its British auxiliaries to launch an all-out attack on Iraq, a country which has had its social fabric and never-considerable military strength eviscerated by more than a decade of United Nations sanctions.

Even as chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix claims that "Iraq appears not to have come to genuine acceptance...of the disarmament which was demanded of it," he concedes that his team of imperialist spies has found no evidence of "weapons of mass destruction." Meanwhile, in Washington the drums of war are beating ever louder. U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell intoned that the "burden is upon Iraq" to prove that it has no weapons. "The onus is on us to prove we don't have any," replied an Iraqi official. "How can you prove a negative?"

Bush's recent promise to hold Iraq's oil resources "in trust" for the Iraqi people is simply a promissory note to the oil barons of ExxonMobil and BP. It is just such moves that offend America's imperialist rivals, most notably France and Germany, who threatened not to vote for Bush's war plans in the UN Security Council. The rift between Europe and the U.S. is sharper today than it has been for decades. When French president Jacques Chirac and German chancellor Gerhard Schröder announced last week that they would not support an immediate war against Iraq, it provoked a frenzied response by the Bush administration. Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld contemptuously dismissed France and Germany as "old Europe." The right-wing tabloid *New York Post* (24 January) ran a front-page headline denouncing Chirac and Schröder as the "Axis of Weasel."

AP

U.S. troops in Kuwait prepare for new desert slaughter in Iraq.

But it is not only the question of Near Eastern oil. As the Berlin *Tagesspiegel* (24 January) opined: "'Iraq' has become the code word for everything that divides Europe from America." The Bush administration's naked assertion of Washington's "right," without even a fig leaf of pretext or provocation, to "preemptively" attack any country perceived as challenging U.S. power and prerogatives has shocked and horrified people, and governments, around the world.

While 150,000 American troops are being deployed to the Persian Gulf region, an article in the *Los Angeles Times* (26 January) reports that the U.S. "is preparing for the possible use of nuclear weapons against Iraq." According to the article, the decision to use nukes rests in the hands of STRATCOM, a "tightly controlled, secret organization" under Rumsfeld. The article noted "the contradictions inherent in contemplating the use of nuclear weapons for the purpose of eliminating weapons of mass destruction."

It is no wonder that the nuclear cowboys in Washington are today seen by much of the world's population as "the greatest threat to world peace," as reported in the *Toronto Sun* (26 January). That was the opinion of more than 83 percent of Europeans polled by *Time* magazine's European edition, with Iraq coming a distant second at 8.9 percent.

This is the shape of the "new world order" emerging from the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. Without Soviet military might to stay its hand, U.S. imperialism has been riding roughshod over and expanding its military presence on every continent. Interimperialist rivalries that were usually subordinated to the common cause of destroying the Soviet Union have now come to the fore. At the same time, the complaints of the European governments about American "unilateralism" are merely the squeals of less powerful states who want a bigger cut of the take (including of a post-Saddam Iraq) and would prefer to be treated less rudely. Even as they condemn an American war against Iraq, the French government has sent warships to the Gulf.

What is needed is to mount *class-struggle opposition* against this imperialist war. This in turn requires a policy of uncompromising proletarian class independence. Yet the European pseudo-socialist left kowtows to the various labor and social-democratic parties, historic "left" enemies of proletarian revolution. In so doing, the fake left acts in the service of the more "humane" pretensions of their own rulers, whose appetites are currently restrained by the military ascendancy of U.S. imperialism. Last fall, a whole raft of European leftists including the Italian Rifondazione Comunista, the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and the British Socialist Workers Party and Workers Power issued a "call on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans." Far from advancing a struggle for "peace," these putative leftists who appeal to their own bourgeoisies against U.S. imperialism promote the resurgent chauvinism that paves the way for a future interimperialist war. Thus, for example, Rifondazione Comunista's *Liberazione* (23 January) ran a headline, "Paris-Berlin, United for Peace."

This treacherous role is all the more

continued on page 10

Young Spartacus

Marxism, War and the Fight For Socialist Revolution...5

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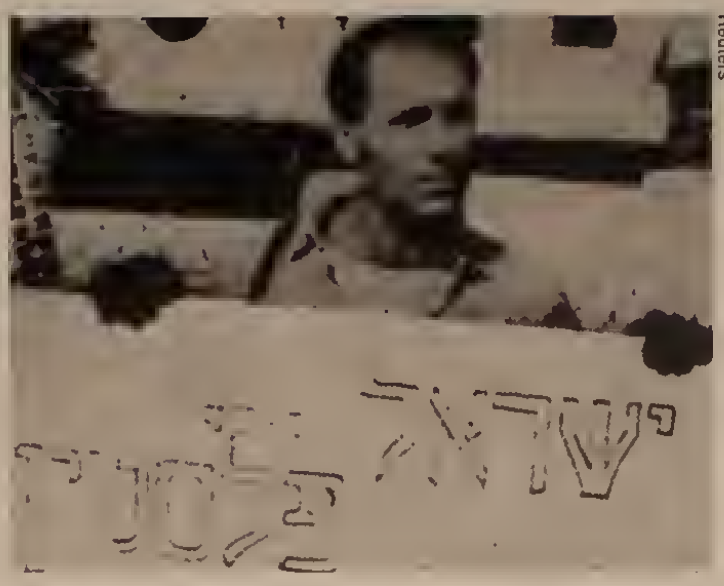
Free Mordechai Vanunu Now!

While hundreds of United Nations "inspectors" storm into homes and factories around Iraq looking for alleged "weapons of mass destruction," the man who exposed the deadliest arsenal of mass destruction in the Near East languishes in an Israeli dungeon. In 1986, Mordechai Vanunu, a former technician at the Israeli nuclear weapons facility in Dimona, was kidnapped by the secret police, thrown into a desert prison in Ashkelon and sentenced to 18 years by a secret military court for revealing to the *London Times* that Israel had amassed upwards of 200 nuclear warheads. At a parole hearing in November, the state claimed that Vanunu continued to pose a threat to Israeli "security." His lawyer is pursuing an appeal, but his jailers have told his family that he won't be released until April 2004.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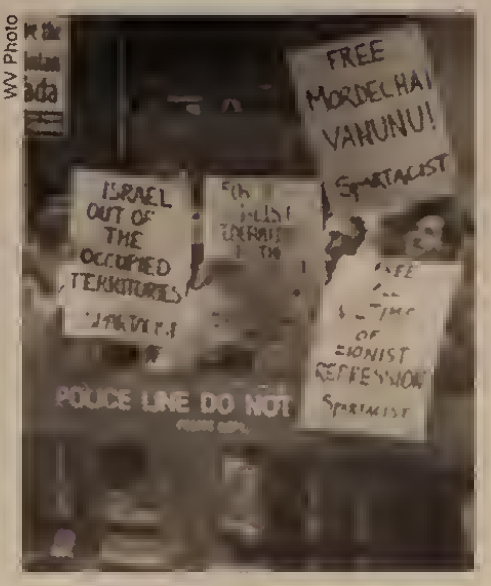

WV Photo

Left: Vanunu at 1985 demonstration for Palestinian rights at Beersheba's Ben-Gurion University. Right: 1996 NYC rally demands freedom for Vanunu.

A London *Guardian* (4 October 2002) article on Vanunu, headlined "Israel's Arms Inspector," quotes a defiant poem he wrote in defense of his action: "You are the secret agent of the people. You are the eyes of the nation." For his courageous act on behalf of all humanity, Vanunu has already spent 16 years behind bars, including 12 years in solitary confinement in a six-by-nine foot cell.

For many years, another former Israeli weapons scientist, Marcus Klingberg, was also imprisoned in a cell in Ashkelon. Klingberg was released recently from his house arrest after completing a total of 20 years of imprisonment. Now 84 years old and in very bad health, Klingberg was an internationally prominent scientist who had published scores of works on epidemiology when he suddenly disappeared in January 1983. Klingberg, too, had been kidnapped by the secret police and tried in a secret military court. As assistant director of the Nes Tsiona biological research center, Klingberg reported to Soviet intelligence about the more than 40 kinds of weapons produced there, ranging from viruses to mushroom poisons. Klingberg had fought with the Red Army during World War II and recognized the debt he owed to the Soviet Union for saving his life and the lives of countless other Jews in defeating the Nazi scourge. We honor Marcus Klingberg.

As a Sephardic Jew whose family had emigrated from Morocco, it was Vanunu's own experience of discrimination at the hands of the European-derived Ashkenazi establishment that led to his active alienation from Zionism. He took up the cause of Palestinian rights as a student at Beersheba's Ben-Gurion University, where he befriended Bedouin and Palestinian students and participated in protests for Palestinian equality and against the 1982 Lebanon war. Some 2,000 Palestinians have been slaughtered since the beginning of the Zionist military onslaught in the Occupied Territories over two years ago, and tens of thousands more have been imprisoned. All opponents of Zionist terror must demand: *Free Mordechai Vanunu! Free all Palestinian victims of Zionist repression!* ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Honor Communist Leaders Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg!

The month of January marks the anniversary of the deaths of revolutionary Marxist leaders Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and V.I. Lenin. Co-founders of the German Communist Party, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were murdered by reactionary Freikorps troops at the behest of the ruling Social Democrats, who ordered the bloody suppression of the January 1919 Spartakist uprising. Five years later, Lenin, co-leader with Leon Trotsky of the Russian October Revolution of 1917, died after suffering a series of strokes following an assassination attempt in 1918. We print below a speech by Liebknecht to the newly formed Congress of Workers and Soldiers Councils in Berlin a month before his murder.

Brothers, Comrades, Friends! The day on which the first Congress of Workers and Soldiers Councils meets is of historic importance. The first task of this Congress is to defend the revolution, to put down the counterrevolution.

Disarming of all generals and officers, the dissolution of the previous command, the founding of a Red Guard to carry out the social revolution.... Presently we have in Germany not a socialist but a capitalist republic. The socialist republic must first be brought forth by the proletariat through struggle against the current regime, which has become the representative of capitalism. We demand from the Congress that it take full political power into its hands for the purpose of carrying out socialism, and that it not transfer power to a National Assembly which cannot be an organ of the revolution. We demand of the Congress of the [workers and soldiers] councils that it extend its hand to our Russian brothers and request delegates from the Russians. We seek world revolution and the unity of proletarians of all countries under workers and soldiers councils.

—Karl Liebknecht, "To the All-German Soviet Congress,"
Die Röte Fahne, 17 December 1918

Spartacus Youth Club Forums & Classes

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Spartacus Youth Club Forum

Lessons of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement

Tuesday, February 11, 4 p.m.
San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center, C-112
Information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

BOSTON

Monday, 7 p.m.
February 3: **Marxism: A Guide to Action**
Boston University, Room TBA
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453 or
e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

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Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
February 4: **Marxist Materiallsm vs. Liberal Idealism**
University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis, Room TBA
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441 or
e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

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Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.
February 4: **Marxism and the Fight for Revolution Today**
Columbia University
306 Hamilton Hall
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.
February 15: **The Revolution Betrayed and the Struggle of the Trotskyist Opposition**
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

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Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
February 12: **Fighting Racist Repression: Labor Must Defend Immigrants, Natives, All the Oppressed**
University of Toronto
Sidney Smith, Room 1088
100 St. George St.
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

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Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m.
February 4: **The Russian Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power**
University of British Columbia
Student Union Building, Room 211
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: tlll@took.ca

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No. 18, January 2003

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For New October Revolutions!

Translated from *WV* No. 774, 8 Feb. 2002

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LRP: Apologists for Arab Nationalism

The gratuitous destruction of dozens of Palestinian shops in the West Bank village of Nazlat Issa by Israeli army bulldozers on January 21 is the latest step in the Sharon government's drive to eliminate even a semblance of Palestinian national existence. That aim was driven home by the massive Zionist military operation last spring—carried out with a green light from the Israeli rulers' patrons in Washington—which was marked by the army massacre in the Jenin refugee camp and the devastation of homes, hospitals, schools and water and sewage treatment systems in other West Bank cities and towns. Under cover of the coming U.S.-led war against Iraq, Israel's rulers could well carry out the genocidal "transfer" program openly advocated by many of Sharon's political allies, i.e., the forcible expulsion of the Palestinian masses from "Greater Israel."

As we wrote in a Spartacist League statement in response to the Jenin massacre (*WV* No. 778, 5 April 2002): "The international working class must urgently rally to the defense of the Palestinian people against the Zionist military terror machine." *Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories! All U.S./UN imperialist forces out of the Near East! For a socialist federation of the Near East!*

The coming U.S.-led war against Iraq could well ignite renewed explosions of social turmoil in the Arab countries. But if such struggles are to aid the liberation of the Palestinians, the Arab workers, the oppressed women and myriad national and religious minorities, what is required is the forging of internationalist Marxist workers parties implacably opposed to any reliance on the Arab bourgeois regimes or one or another imperialist agency. Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat is today hounded by the Zionist rulers, imprisoned in the bombed-out remnants of his Ramallah headquarters. But it is precisely the petty-bourgeois nationalist politics of Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that has helped bring the Palestinians to this tragic impasse.

The strategy of "armed struggle" pursued by the PLO in the 1960s and '70s was never aimed at defeating the overwhelmingly more powerful Zionist state but rather at pressuring the Arab regimes to take up the cause of "Arab unity" against Israel. Instead, the Arab capitalist states moved to bloodily repress Palestinian militants, with Jordan's King Hussein slaughtering more than 10,000 PLO fighters in the infamous "Black September" massacre in 1970 and tens of thousands more killed later in Lebanon. The PLO's pursuit of the imperialists culminated in the 1993 Oslo accord, granting Arafat the nominal autonomy of a handful of Palestinian ghettos in the Occupied Territories which were then increasingly sealed off and subjected to starvation blockades by the Zionist occupation forces. In despair, the Palestinians, once among the most cosmopolitan peoples of the Near East, have increasingly turned to Islamic fundamentalists like Hamas and Islamic Jihad, vile anti-Semitic and anti-Christian religious bigots who seek to enslave women and extirpate any manifestation of social progress.

Yet one self-styled Marxist group, the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), urges Palestinian militants to recycle the petty-bourgeois nationalist politics whose suicidal logic is today manifest. The LRP claims to offer a proletarian perspective, raising the call for a socialist federation of the Near East and declaring: "The road to Palestinian freedom really begins with unchaining the Arab working classes of the region from their bourgeois leaders and opening a revolutionary struggle against their neo-colonial Arab rulers" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Spring 2002). But everything the LRP stands for is in flat contradiction to these words.

Defend the Palestinians!

Fremson/NY Times

Zionist troops round up Palestinian man in sweep of Nablus, August 2002.

LRP: National Unity vs. Class Unity

Sneeringly dismissing "Spartacist fantasies of an 'Arab/Hebrew workers' revolution'," the LRP rejects out of hand any possibility of winning the Hebrew workers to the cause of socialist revolution. Yet there can be no revolutionary perspective in the Near East without taking into account the proletariat of Israel, the most technologically advanced and militarily powerful country in the region. The Zionist state is armed to the teeth, including with a sizable nuclear arsenal which it would willingly use to irradiate every Arab city if it perceived a threat to its existence. If the Zionist citadel is not cracked from within through workers revolution, all talk of national justice is simply empty rhetoric that does nothing to advance the cause of the Palestinians. But there is no way the Hebrew workers will be won to the need for common class struggle against the Israeli capitalist rulers if their own right to a national existence is threatened.

Moreover, if the working masses of the Arab countries are to be won to the communist program, it is necessary to directly confront the false consciousness that binds them to their oppressors. That means defending the rights of the Kurds in Iraq and Syria, the Berbers in Algeria and Morocco, the Copts in Egypt. It means fighting against the horrid oppression of women, symbolized by the veil and *purdah* (seclusion), that is enforced by Islamic reactionaries as well as by "secular" nationalist regimes. And it means combatting the anti-Semitism propagated by the Arab rulers and Islamists, which is one of the main things poisoning the consciousness of the Arab proletariat.

But the LRP does none of these things. Its article does not so much as mention, much less defend, the rights of non-Arab or non-Muslim minorities or of women in the Arab countries. It accepts the lie propagated by Arab nationalists, Islamic fundamentalists and, indeed, the Zionists that the Hebrew-speaking people as a whole are and will always be wedded to Zionist chauvinism. Instead, the LRP enthuses over nationalist "armed struggle against Israel" (not even acknowledging Israel's stockpile of nuclear weapons) and seeks only to give such struggle a more "mass" and "militant" rendering. The LRP declares:

> "To aid the Palestinians and expose the present illusions in Arafat and the Arab rulers, proletarian revolutionaries demand of them: provide arms to the masses!...
> "The street protests in support of the intifada are vital, but they need to be joined by massive general strikes in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and the other countries of the Middle East demanding arms for the Palestinians."

This is the height of nationalist cretinism. The LRP calls for a general strike, which poses the question of which class shall rule. But the LRP's purpose is *not* to sweep away the neocolonial Arab bourgeoisies but rather to chain proletarian struggle to the yoke of "national unity" with those bourgeoisies. In its headline, the LRP calls "For Arab Workers' Revolution"—not to smash the Arab capitalist states but "To Smash Israeli/U.S. Terror!"

The Arab regimes that the LRP calls on to aid the Palestinians are themselves responsible for the slaughter of some *50,000* Palestinians between 1967 and 1977. Yet, in pursuit of the treacherous fiction of "united Arab mass struggle," the LRP cannot even bring itself to denounce the blood-drenched, U.S.-backed Hashemite monarchy for the 1970 massacre in Jordan. Instead they blame the Israelis for "the 'Black September' events of 1970 when the Mossad, Israel's CIA, helped to prop up Jordan's monarchy against a Palestinian uprising."

Any socialist worth his salt solidarizes with the Palestinians who defend themselves against the murderous Zionist occupation forces in Gaza and the West Bank—the Israeli army and its fascistic settler auxiliaries. But if the last two years have demonstrated anything, it is that the Palestinians cannot prevail in a purely military confrontation with the Israeli state. And today much of the Palestinian "armed struggle" consists of indiscriminate terrorist attacks against anyone who happens to be in an Israeli shopping mall or disco. Those who perpetrate such criminal acts, deeming every Israeli to be the "enemy," mirror the chauvinist mindset of the Zionist rulers themselves.

The mass protests in the Arab countries last spring were an expression of solidarity with the besieged Palestinians and a measure of the outrage of the Arab masses against their own rulers. But these demonstrations were shot through with anti-Semitism and largely dominated by Islamic fundamentalists. The LRP barely acknowledges this danger, while noting that some Arab workers have "turned to reactionary clerical leaders, another dead end."

Marxists seek to shift the axis of struggle from Israeli against Arab to class against class. We stand with Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin, who wrote: "Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism. Be it even of the 'most just,' 'purest,' most refined and civilised brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism" ("Critical Remarks on the National Question," 1913).

Instead of seeking to win the proletariat to a political perspective of class independence, the LRP enthuses over the need for "unity of all Palestinians in the struggle" and "united Arab mass struggle." This is a recipe for unity of Arab workers and peasants with the oil sheiks and bonapartist despots, for unity of leftist Palestinian militants with the cutthroat reactionaries of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. And it serves the purpose of the Arab rulers, who have long played on the need for unity against the "Zionist entity" in order

continued on page 4

Der Spiegel

Gamma

Left: Amman, Jordan in 1970 as King Hussein's regime slaughtered 10,000 Palestinians in Black September massacre. "Stateless" Palestinians have languished for decades in refugee camps, as in Jordan.

LRP...

(continued from page 3)

to deflect the anger of those they oppress toward an external enemy.

Is All of the U.S. "Occupied Territory"?

The LRP explicitly denies the national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people and embraces the call of radical Arab nationalists and Islamists: "All Israel is 'Occupied Territory'!" In polemicizing against the LRP's line, we wrote ("Zionist Bloodbath in Jenin," *WV* No. 779, 19 April 2002):

> "The doctrine that an oppressor nation forfeits its right to self-determination has nothing in common with socialism and democracy; it is the ideology of genocidal irredentism. The Zionist state was created by crushing the national rights of the Palestinians. But securing national justice for the Palestinians does *not* mean reversing the terms of oppression and denying the democratic rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. Basic to the Leninist position on the national question—the only consistently democratic position—is that all nations have a right to self-determination."

In response, the LRP screamed that we are "in a word, Zionists" and insisted that "Leninists unhesitatingly support the rights of the oppressed over the oppressors" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Spring 2002). Leninists unhesitatingly defend small, dependent nations in a military conflict with imperialist countries. And we unhesitatingly oppose every manifestation of oppression and discrimination—be it national, racial, sexual or religious. But we do not thereby elevate the oppressed to the pantheon of "progressive peoples" who have rights as opposed to "reactionary peoples" who have none. If all of Israel is "occupied territory," what does that make of the U.S.? The Zionists' atrocities pale in comparison to the brutality and butchery with which America's founders and rulers wiped out entire indigenous peoples. Why doesn't the LRP raise the call "*All of the United States is Occupied Territory!*"?

The LRP would do well to note what Lenin actually wrote in his 1914 pamphlet, *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, where he explained that "the proletariat confines itself, so to speak, to the negative demand for recognition of the *right* to self-determination, without giving guarantees to any nation, and without undertaking to give *anything* at the *expense* of another nation." This was the policy pursued by Lenin both before and after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution that smashed the tsarist prison house of peoples. Lenin's aim was to take the national question off the agenda in order to bring the class question to the fore. He fought indefatigably against any manifestation of Great Russian chauvinism while defending the rights of *all* nations to self-determination—i.e., to establish their own states—including under proletarian rule.

Normally, the right of self-determination of an oppressor nation is a moot point. But in cases of geographically interpenetrated peoples—as in Israel/Palestine, where Palestinian Arabs and Hebrew-speaking Israelis live in and lay claim to the same small sliver of land—under capitalism the exercise of national self-determination by either of the populations will necessarily be at the expense of the other. In such cases, a democratic solution to the national question can only come about through socialist revolution, because only the proletariat in power has an interest in resolving national antagonisms and can lay the material basis for the economic development of all peoples, leading to the establishment of a global communist society.

Look for example at how the Bolsheviks dealt with the Caucasus, a patchwork of nationalities and pre-national groupings which had been riven by interethnic conflicts for centuries, after the October Revolution. The Bolsheviks not only granted the various nations in the region the right to form their own independent states but also developed a range of administrative solutions to allow even tiny ethnic groupings a measure of local autonomy. Thus the workers revolution put a stop to ethnic warfare. Contrast this with the LRP, which offers the Hebrew-speaking people only the following "right" even within the framework of proletarian state power: "Israelis unwilling to live in a Palestinian workers' state will have the right to leave."

In an attempt to defend the indefensible, the LRP resorts to lies and distortions. In the latest issue of *Proletarian Revolution* (Fall 2002), the LRP asserts that we oppose the right of return for Palestinian refugees. Continuing a theme from its earlier article, it also equates the Hebrew-speaking *nation* with the Zionist *state* in order to claim that we "defend the preservation of Israel." Before exposing these lies, it is necessary to first untangle the LRP's deliberate confusionism. For Marxists, a nation is a people with a common language, culture and political economy; a state is an instrument of organized violence—centrally the army, police and prisons—through which a particular class maintains its rule. The Israeli capitalist state is the enemy not only of the Palestinians but above all of the workers of Israel, Hebrew or Arab. In the very article in *WV* No. 779 which the LRP attacks, we wrote:

> "The national emancipation of the Palestinians—including *the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland*—necessarily entails workers revolutions to sweep away the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the bloody Ba'athist bonapartists in Syria, to bring down the capitalist rulers of Lebanon and to *shatter the Zionist state*, establishing a socialist federation of the Near East." [emphases added]

Leninism vs. Petty-Bourgeois Leftism

We take our stand with the Palestinian Trotskyists of the 1940s, who fought against all odds to transcend the nationalist conflict and unite Arab and Hebrew workers in common struggle. They opposed the Zionist partition of Palestine and proclaimed at the time of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War: "*The only way to peace between the two peoples of this country is turning the guns against the instigators of murder in both camps*" ("Against the Stream," reprinted in *Fourth International*, May 1948; emphasis in original). At the same time, the Trotskyists were sober about the enormous obstacles to united revolutionary struggle by Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers. The 1947 "Draft Theses on the Jewish Question," which was adopted by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International in the wake of big strikes by Arab and Jewish government and oil refinery workers, stated:

> "At the present stage, *large-scale* unity between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine is unrealizable; only on a very limited scale and to the extent that a section of the Jewish workers is employed outside the 'closed' Jewish economy, has it been possible for Jewish-Arab strikes such as those of the past year to occur. But this does not mean that such unity is excluded for all time." [emphasis in original]

More than five decades of Zionist oppression and privation have deeply exacerbated differences between Hebrew and Arab workers, while hardening nationalist antagonisms on both sides. These hatreds have grown particularly acute in the face of more than two years of unremitting Zionist terror.

We have no illusion that it will be easy to shatter the chauvinist consensus that currently binds the Hebrew proletariat to its capitalist exploiters. In all likelihood, it will take great historic events, like a victorious workers revolution in one of the Arab countries, to inspire Israeli workers on the road of revolutionary struggle against the Zionist bourgeoisie.

Brian Hendler

December 1997: Public sector workers general strike tied up Israel for five days.

When we attacked the LRP for writing off the whole of the Hebrew-speaking working class as a "labor aristocracy," they admitted to "grains of truth" in our description of class and other social divisions in Israeli society. At the same time, they note that "Israeli workers enjoy a tremendous privilege over Palestinian workers" and that their "elevated standard of living serves to tie large numbers of Israeli workers to supporting the Israeli state." There is, to use the LRP's expression, a "grain of truth" in this statement.

But to conclude from this, as does the LRP, that "a majority of Israeli workers can be expected to remain loyal to the continued existence of Israel" is to deny the possibility of making the proletariat conscious of its historic task as the gravedigger of the capitalist system. Israel is no exception to the rule that the interests of capital and labor are irreconcilably counterposed and that the contradictions of capitalism necessarily engender class struggle. In essence, the LRP's hostility toward the Hebrew workers mirrors the "white skin privilege" line pushed by Third World nationalists and sections of the American New Left in the 1960s and '70s. They argued that workers in the imperialist countries, and especially white workers in the U.S., had been "bought off" by imperialism and were thus incapable of making a socialist revolution.

From its inception, the LRP has been defined not by a proletarian—i.e., Trotskyist—program but by the prevailing winds of petty-bourgeois radicalism. The LRP is a direct political heir of Max Shachtman, who led a split from the American Trotskyist movement in 1940. Succumbing to anti-Communist hysteria among radical intellectuals over the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact and the Soviet invasion of capitalist Finland and Poland at the outbreak of World War II, Shachtman repudiated the Trotskyist call for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union. The LRP has throughout its existence followed in Shachtman's footsteps, joining the imperialists in denouncing the Soviet intervention against CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan in the 1980s and backing Boris Yeltsin in his counterrevolutionary power grab in 1991, which led to the final undoing of the October Revolution.

It was the destruction of the Soviet Union that prepared the way for the current dire situation facing the Palestinians. The Soviet Union provided a counterweight to U.S. imperialism, allowing petty-bourgeois nationalists like the PLO to jockey for support between the U.S. and the USSR. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, this leverage was lost—as well as considerable amounts of financial and military support—and a significantly weakened PLO accepted a sham "autonomy," effectively policing the Palestinian masses on behalf of the Israeli rulers. The 1993 accord laid the basis for further devastating the economy of the Occupied Territories, sealing off tens of thousands of workers from their jobs in Israel, while leading to a massive expansion of Zionist settlements and the virtual imprisonment of the entire Palestinian population in isolated, besieged ghettos. This is what the "democratic" counterrevolution cheered on by the LRP has meant for the Palestinian people.

A workers revolution in one of the Arab countries, proclaiming the internationalist unity of all the working people, would have an enormous impact on the Hebrew-speaking workers of Israel. But if Arab, Persian and Kurdish workers are to break the chains of exploitation and oppression, they must be broken from all variants of nationalism and won to a relentless struggle to extirpate the influence of the Islamic fundamentalists who now pose as the enemies of Zionism and imperialism. Workers of the Near East have a rich tradition of revolutionary struggle. We look to the legacy of the multinational Iranian proletariat that struggled for power in 1953, of the Arab and Kurdish Iraqi workers who sought to make a socialist revolution five years later. To seize on such opportunities when they arise, and to lead them to victory, requires above all the construction of internationalist workers parties, sections of a reforged Fourth International, in opposition to Zionism, Arab nationalism and all manner of religious fundamentalism. ■

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Young Spartacus

Marxism, War and the Fight For Socialist Revolution

We publish below, slightly edited, the second part of an internal educational presentation given at a Spartacist League meeting in New York City in December 2002 by Alan Wilde, editor of Workers Vanguard. *Part One appeared in* Workers Vanguard *No. 795 (17 January).*

PART TWO OF TWO

F.G. Nordmann

Workers barricades in Berlin during 1848 Revolution. Across Europe, revolutionary wave sought to eradicate last vestiges of feudalism, but was betrayed by bourgeoisies' alliance with reaction.

Revolutionary defeatism (that is, fighting for the defeat of all belligerent powers in a war through socialist revolution) and revolutionary defensism (standing for the military defense of a backward country against an imperialist or predatory power) are generalities that help to guide Marxists, but they are not dogmas. Marxism is a living science, and is therefore anti-dogmatic. The positions we hold on war today are a product of the development of both capitalism and the Marxist and workers movements. Along those lines, it is useful to look at how Marxism has historically approached the question of war.

In a certain sense, Marxism came on the scene with the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, which was written in late 1847, on the eve of a great and general upheaval throughout Europe. To understand war and Marxism at that time, one has to understand that this was a period marking about the end of when the bourgeoisie was still a revolutionary, and hence a progressive class. Though it wasn't the first bourgeois revolution, the Great French Revolution of 1789 was the most decisive in bringing the bourgeoisie to political power and destroying feudalism in that country. Within a few years, France was invaded by a terrified feudal Europe, and in turn France waged war on Europe. And it was a new soldier that was fighting in France, not one fighting to defend the land or property of his feudal lord, but one fighting for the nation, for something broader than his own provincial existence—for the defense and spreading of enormous gains and unprecedented promises of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Progress Publishers

W.E. Debenham

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, authors of *Communist Manifesto* and founders of proletarian socialism.

Within France, the radical bourgeois Jacobins took over in the early 1790s, executing the former king and instituting a regime of revolutionary democracy and terror against the counterrevolution. By the end of the 18th century, however, the Jacobins had been overthrown by right-wing elements. The social revolution was not overturned but the regime of mass political democracy was replaced by one of dictatorial bonapartism against the masses. This found its most profound expression in Napoleon—a former Jacobin—who ruled France as emperor until 1814. Napoleon, for his own expansionist reasons, also waged war against Europe. And in the process he did something quite extraordinary. Most everywhere he went, whether it be Italy, Germany, or elsewhere, he overturned the existing feudal property relations and instituted in their place bourgeois property forms. He had to base his rule on the property forms on which his power rested—bourgeois property forms. Napoleon himself had an understanding of what he was doing; he called himself a "soldier of the Revolution."

Now, the reason I went through all this was to impress the point that in 1848, Marx and Engels still saw revolutionary potential in the European bourgeoisies. Here's one very interesting example. In a January 1848 article by Engels, he supports—repeat, *supports*—the French invasion of Algeria—i.e., he still saw the potential for Napoleonic-type wars by the French bourgeoisie:

> "The conquest of Algeria is an important and fortunate fact for the progress of civilisation.... And if we may regret that the liberty of the Bedouins of the desert has been destroyed, we must not forget that these same Bedouins were a nation of robbers.... All these nations of free barbarians look very proud, noble and glorious at a distance, but only come near them and you will find that they, as well as the more civilised nations, are ruled by the lust of gain, and only employ ruder and more cruel means. And after all, the modern *bourgeois*, with civilisation, industry, order, and at least relative enlightenment following him, is preferable to the feudal lord or the marauding robber, with the barbarian state of society to which they belong."

Marx and Engels would soon come to recognize that occupation by the European powers distorted the development of backward countries, and that chauvinism among the proletariat in the advanced countries was a huge obstacle to socialist consciousness.

The revolutions of 1848 had a couple of characteristics. They were democratic revolutions, uprisings to bring about political democracy as well as to destroy any remnants left of feudalism in Europe. In Germany, the revolution also had the vital character of attempting to unify the country, which until 1871 was split into numerous princely states, each ruled by its own prince or king. The revolutions initially involved all the classes of society, except, of course, the feudal-derived classes. But a couple of things became clear as the revolutions continued. The first is that the bourgeoisie feared the prospect of revolutionary upheaval more than the dominance of the landed nobility politically and even to a certain extent economically. The revolutionary masses were betrayed when the bourgeoisies essentially turned their backs on the revolutions and made alliances with the aristocracy against the working and artisan masses in revolt. What also became clear was that the proletariat was still too weak to vie for power in an immediate sense. It was the experience of the betrayals of the bourgeoisie in the 1848 revolutions that led Marx to emphasize the necessity of organizing the proletariat in a party independent of all other classes. This was elucidated in an 1850 speech where he said:

> "Our task [is] to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, the proletariat has conquered state power, and the association of proletarians, not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world, has advanced so far that competition among the proletarians in these countries has ceased and that at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. For us the issue cannot be the alteration of private property but only its annihilation, not the smoothing over of class antagonisms but the abolition of classes, not the improvement of the existing society but the foundation of a new one."

The 1848 revolutions were defeated by a series of betrayals as well as military defeats by stronger forces of reaction. And throughout, one thing became clear: the power that stood behind the most reactionary forces elsewhere in Europe—itself the most reactionary power in Europe—was Russia.

Russia was hated and feared by all progressive forces in Europe. It was one of the last places where outright feudalism still thrived, where the peasants were still chained in serfdom and where there was no independent bourgeoisie to compete with the tsarist monarchy. And it was a very strong power that also had allies in Europe. In 1848, Marx and Engels genuinely believed that the downfall of Russia would open the floodgates for revolutionary forces throughout the continent, because it would remove the most substantial obstacle to revolution—a strong state defending an outmoded system of production. So they favored any war waged by any European power against Russia.

The National Question

Now, there is another point that plays a strong role in Marx and Engels' attitude to war around 1848, and that's the national question. One of the great gains of the bourgeois revolutions, like the French, was the consolidation of the nation-state on the basis of bourgeois rule. This was progressive in relation to feudalism. It meant the breaking down of provincial barriers—i.e., whether someone's from Normandy or another French province, everyone becomes a citizen of France. The creation of a single nation-state meant the

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Marxism, War...

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consolidation of a single currency and of a capitalist system of production, which meant the greater development of industry and, in turn, the growth of the working class, which at the time was still in its infancy. One country meant one working class and a single official language—i.e., the tearing down of barriers within that nation-state dividing the proletariat. The abolition of serfdom meant the downfall of the feudal lord and the freeing up of the peasant population to become workers. All this meant that small populations within the boundaries of greater powers, or even outside them—small peoples, as Marx and Engels called them—should be assimilated, i.e., Marx and Engels generally opposed the right of national self-determination for "small peoples."

To give you a sense of what this meant, you can look at where these two questions—Russia as the center of all evil in Europe and the national question—intersected with war: the question of pan-Slavism. The South Slavs, generally the people who occupy the Balkans today, were "small peoples." Much like their Slavic cousins in Russia, they were ruled by feudal reaction, and much like in Russia at the time, Marx and Engels did not believe there was any internal base there to fight for democratic revolutions. And it's not just that they resembled Russia, but they were backed to the hilt by Russia, and any ally of Russia, according to Marx and Engels, did not deserve the least bit of sympathy. In fact, it was Russian-backed Slavic forces that militarily suppressed the 1848-49 uprisings in Vienna, Austria. So, as little peoples who are allies of the greatest force for reaction, they should have no rights of self-determination and, according to Marx and Engels, should in fact be assimilated. Here are a few lines from an 1849 article by Engels, written after Slavic forces moved in and crushed the Viennese rebellion:

> "There is no country in Europe which does not have in some corner or other one or several ruined fragments of peoples, the remnant of a former population that was suppressed and held in bondage by the nation which later became the main vehicle of historical development. These relics of a nation mercilessly trampled under foot in the course of history, as Hegel says, these ***residual fragments of peoples*** always become fanatical standard-bearers of counter-revolution and remain so until their complete extirpation or loss of their national character, just as their whole existence in general is itself a protest against a great historical revolution....
>
> "Such, in Austria, are the pan-Slavist ***Southern Slavs***, who are nothing but the ***residual fragment of peoples***, resulting from an extremely confused ***thousand years of development***....
>
> "The next world war will result in the disappearance from the face of the earth not only of reactionary classes and dynasties, but also of entire reactionary peoples. And that, too, is a step forward."
>
> —*The Magyar Struggle*, January 1849 [emphasis in original]

Engels and Marx would later substantially soften their position on the South Slavs, also recognizing the internal contradictions that were being played out in Russia. And it wasn't long after 1848 that they would develop a very different attitude toward colonialism, expressed, for example, by their impassioned and powerful defense of the Sepoy rebellion in British-occupied India in the late 1850s: On the national question, by the late 1860s Marx and Engels called for the independence of Ireland from English rule, explaining the importance this held not only for Irish but also English workers. In 1870, Marx wrote that the antagonism between Irish and English workers was "the ***secret of the impotence of the English working class***.... It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power."

But what must be understood is that at the time of the 1848 revolutions and wars, Marx and Engels viewed the proletariat as a class still in its infancy. They saw that the class contradictions between bourgeois and worker in Europe, while emerging, were still partial, and that therefore the key task for the European continent was the full development of capitalist relations in order to facilitate the full development of the proletariat. Hence their outlook was colored by a view of progressive and reactionary nations—progressive being those that facilitated the growth of capitalist development and reactionary being those that hindered it, Russia prime among the latter. The only Slavic nationalist movement that Marx and Engels supported was the Polish one, because Poland was occupied and oppressed by Russia.

The Franco-Prussian War

If you jump ahead a little over 20 years, it is interesting to look at what changed and what didn't for Marx, as well as in terms of economic developments in Europe. In 1870 the Franco-Prussian War broke out. Germany was not a unified nation, and its unification was a major goal of the Marxists for the reasons I outlined earlier. Through a series of wars, particularly one in 1866, what became clear was that the Prussian leader Bismarck was to make Prussia the dominant region of a unified Germany and himself the dominant leader. The prospect of revolution uniting Germany was bleak. Bismarck was carrying out unification, except it was under the jackboot of Prussian militarism, through a series of wars.

Roger-Viollet

Paris Commune of 1871. Communards and National Guardsmen stand over toppled statue of Louis Napoleon, symbol of bourgeois rule.

The final one of these wars, and the most decisive, was between Prussia and France, then under the rule of Emperor Napoleon III, who gained power in 1851 after the defeat of the French 1848 Revolution. Bonaparte was determined that Germany not unify, as it would become a major competitor with French power, so he declared war on Prussia. What was Marx's position on this pivotal war?

Marx's *The Civil War in France* presents his views on this war as well as on the Paris Commune of 1871, which was the first time the working class had any experience with political power, though it was only in the city of Paris and lasted less than three months. Marx considered the Franco-Prussian War predatory on the side of France. "On the German side," he wrote, "the war is a war of defence," i.e., Marxists had a side in this war, but only as long as it remained defensive, because its victory meant German unification. The war did not remain defensive, and Marx had no illusions that it would. The Prussians won, Bismarck united Germany, and he then proceeded to advance into France and take over the region of Alsace-Lorraine. And at that point, Marx's attitude toward the war changed, especially with the outbreak of the workers rebellion in Paris. For our purposes, though, what I want to look at is the conduct of the Marxists in relation to the war, particularly in the early phase, when it was defensive.

In 1870, the North German Parliament (or Reichstag), which was controlled by Prussia, took a vote on war credits. The two main Marxist representatives there were Wilhelm Liebknecht (the revolutionary Karl Liebknecht's father) and German socialist leader August Bebel. Wilhelm Liebknecht was determined to vote no on the war credits because of genuine opposition to German imperial designs as well as less savory reasons. Liebknecht came from southern Germany, which was extremely resentful of Prussian power. Marx and Engels repeatedly took him to task for trying to form alliances with reactionary South German forces against the Prussians. Apparently, Bebel had a screaming fight with Liebknecht and they compromised and abstained on the vote for war credits.

This vote is important. Both Luxemburg and Lenin turned to it in the course of World War I to make the point that even in a war where the Marxists had a side, we did not vote for war credits, i.e., we did not place confidence in the bourgeoisie to carry out a defensive war and keep it defensive. After the vote, Liebknecht apparently went back to his job as co-editor of a socialist newspaper, and there were several fights with him on the editorial board because he did not want to concede any support for the war on the Prussian side. Finally, the ed board appealed to Marx directly and Marx asked Engels for his opinion.

When you look at the original documents and letters on this debate, what comes across is a furious argument with Liebknecht over the propaganda he was putting out in the course of the war, which had an abstentionist and neutral quality. Here is a quote from an August 1870 letter to Marx that explains how Engels viewed the question and why he and Marx supported the war:

> "The case seems to me to be as follows: Germany has been driven by Badinguet [Napoleon III] into a war for her national existence. If Badinguet defeats her, Bonapartism will be strengthened for years and Germany broken for years, perhaps for generations. In that event there can be no question any more of an independent German working-class movement either; the struggle to restore Germany's national existence will absorb everything, and at best the German workers will be dragged in the wake of the French. If Germany wins, French Bonapartism will at any rate be smashed, the endless row about the establishment of German unity will at last be over, the German workers will be able to organise on a national scale quite different from that prevailing hitherto, and the French workers, whatever sort of government may succeed this one, are certain to have a freer field than under Bonapartism. The whole mass of the German people of every class have realised that this is first and foremost a question of national existence and have therefore at once flung themselves into the fray. That in these circumstances a German political party should preach total abstention *à la* Wilhelm and place all sorts of secondary considerations before the main one, seems to me impossible."

Engels goes on to emphasize a six-point program for the propaganda of the party:

> "1) join the national movement...insofar and for so long as it is limited to the defence of Germany....
>
> "2) at the same time emphasise the difference between German national and dynastic-Prussian interests;
>
> "3) oppose any ANNEXATION of Alsace and Lorraine....
>
> "4) as soon as a non-chauvinistic republican government is at the helm in Paris, work for an honourable peace with it;
>
> "5) constantly stress the unity of interests between the German and French workers, who did not approve of the war and are also not making war on each other;
>
> "6) ***Russia***, as in the Address of the International."

What this last one meant was that if Russia tried to interfere in the war, Germany should declare war on Russia.

The question of the vote on war credits by Liebknecht and Bebel is interesting. I could find nothing from either Marx or Engels that ever refers to the vote. In a sense, they did not care much how the Marxists in parliament voted on the question. It certainly was not an issue of principle. The German workers movement at that time was divided into two wings, one led by those who claimed adherence to Marxism and the other led by followers of Ferdinand Lassalle, who had died in 1864. Since 1866, the Lassalleans had consistently voted for war credits in favor of the Prussians. To my knowledge, while Marx and Engels polemicized against the Lassalleans' overt allegiance to Bismarck, they never took on the question of war credits. When the Lassalleans and the followers of Marx unified at the Gotha Congress in the mid 1870s, forming what would later become the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), Marx issued his scathing critique of the Gotha program. That document, while ripping apart much of what appeared in the unification program, never addressed the question of war credits and in the end supported the unity of the German workers movement.

Imperialism and Opportunism

During the period between the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War and the beginning of World War I in 1914, the nature of capitalist development and hence the nature of the workers movement had changed qualitatively—in ways that have fundamentally determined our attitude toward war ever since. This period was known as the period of general peace in Europe. But this peace in Europe stood in sharp contrast to the many reactionary colonial wars carried out by the European powers in Asia and Africa for the formation of colonies. An extremely significant step took place in this period, which was the development of imperialism, a system of modern, decaying capitalism. In this stage the nation-state had become a barrier to further progressive economic and productive development. To continue to compete on the international scale, the capitalists had to occupy and exploit colonies and spheres of economic influence, exporting finance capital. The first country to go imperialist was Britain, the last, right before the turn of the century, were Germany, the U.S. and Japan. The rise of imperialism had significant effects both on the workers movement and the nature of war in Europe and around the world.

In the early social-democratic movement, including its revolutionary Marxist wing, the source of opportunism was consistently defined as coming from *outside* the workers movement. Opportunist tendencies, it was argued, were a survival of petty-bourgeois democracy carried mainly by the intelligentsia and conditioned by the economic and ideological backwardness or immaturity of the working masses. This definition of opportunism derived from the history of the European left in the decades following the

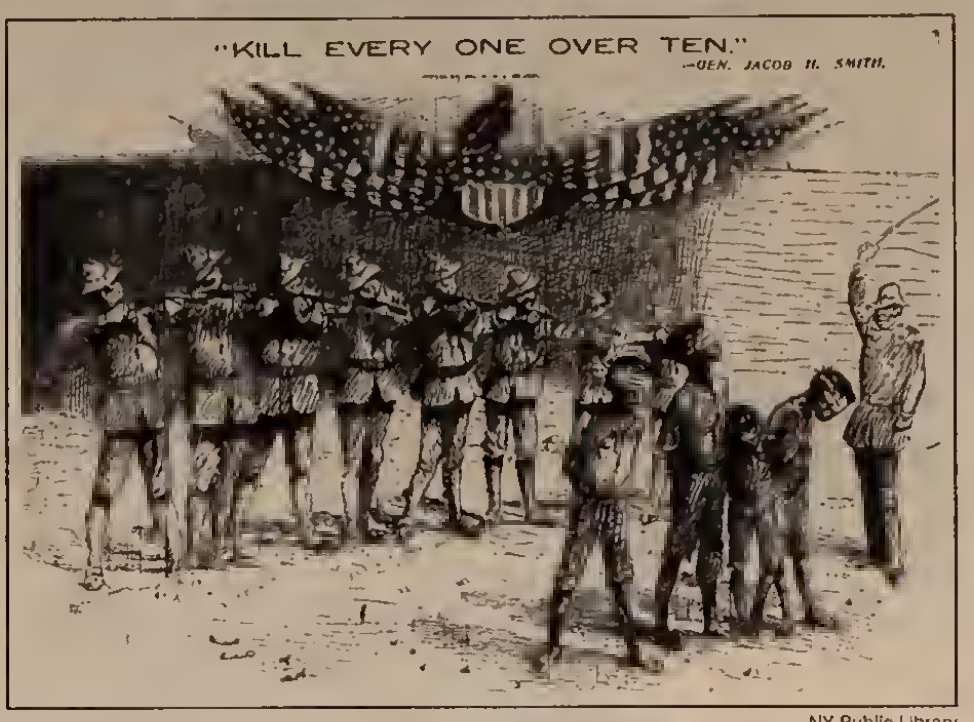
1848 revolutions. The principal tendencies opposed to Marxism—Lassalleanism, for example—were not political representatives of the organic movement of the industrial working class. Rather, they represented the European artisan classes and their struggle against being thrown into the industrial proletariat.

It was understood that Marxism superseded such tendencies through the transformation of the urban artisan classes into a modern proletariat; hence, the struggles by Marx and Engels for national unification and the full development of capitalist relations where they were retarded. By the turn of the century, this definition of opportunism played very much into solidifying the conception of the party of the whole class—that a workers party should encompass every political tendency in the workers movement. It was argued that since opportunism came from outside the workers movement, the growth of the proletariat and of its organization would eventually strengthen the revolutionary tendencies in Social Democracy. Here is a quote from SPD leader Karl Kautsky's 1909 *The Road to Power*, which tried to explain the weakness of revolutionary Social Democracy by pointing to the backwardness of the proletariat, which, Kautsky argued, reflected either a continued identification with the petty bourgeoisie or a lack of confidence in the strength of the workers movement:

> "To a large degree hatched out of the small capitalist and small farmer class, many proletarians long carry the shells of these classes about with them. They do not feel themselves proletarians, but as would-be property owners.... Others, again, have gone further, and have come to recognize the necessity of fighting the capitalists that stand in antagonism to them, but do not feel themselves secure enough and strong enough to declare war on the entire capitalist system. These look to capitalist parties and governments for relief."

In other words, it is entirely a question of ideology.

With the partial exception of Rosa Luxemburg, every revolutionary Social Democrat accepted this definition of the source of opportunism, including Lenin. For example, until the beginning of the First World War, Lenin generally characterized the Russian Mensheviks as a petty-bourgeois intellectual tendency *outside* the workers movement. When asked to justify the formal split in 1912 between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, Lenin argued that the bulk of the class-conscious workers movement in Russia rallied to the side of the Bolsheviks, while the Mensheviks' base consisted largely of intellectuals. This argument had its limits, though. Empirically, at the time of the split, it may have been true, but the view that the Mensheviks were outside the workers movement was impressionistic. The wave of patriotism that swept Russia with the outbreak of World War I, including among workers, served to increase the proletarian base of the opportunist Mensheviks at the expense of the Bolsheviks, who had a revolutionary defeatist line. So, by the time of the February Revolution of 1917, the Mensheviks were far stronger in relation to the Leninists than they had been in 1912.



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Drawing depicts atrocities by U.S. occupation forces in Philippines following 1898 Spanish-American War, which marked emergence of U.S. as imperialist power.

In some of his writings, Lenin began to recognize the inadequate nature of this theory of opportunism. For example, in an April 1914 polemic against Leon Trotsky titled "Unity," he anticipates a split in principle with opportunists in the workers movement, writing:

> "There can be no unity, federal or other, with liberal-labor politicians, with disrupters of the working-class movement, with those who defy the will of the majority. There can and must be unity among all consistent Marxists, among all those who stand for the entire Marxist body and the uncurtailed slogans, independently of the liquidators and apart from them.
>
> "Unity is a great thing and a great slogan. But what the workers' cause needs is the *unity of Marxists*, not unity between Marxists, and opponents and distorters of Marxism."

Dietz Verlag

Rosa Luxemburg agitates against war preparations, 1907.

But it was only with the outbreak of the First World War that the nature of opportunism became more widely clear. Opportunism was in fact not something that emerged outside the workers movement but was a component of the workers movement. It was not merely a question of ideology but of the material interests of the labor bureaucracy. The bourgeoisie was able to buy off the bulk of the labor bureaucracy, what American Marxist Daniel De Leon called the "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class"—as well as a tiny minority of the working class, the labor aristocracy—through the spoils of imperialist plunder.

We often make the point that the AFL-CIO officialdom views the world through the same lens as the capitalist rulers. This is not simply ideological, but has its roots in the fact that for these labor tops to retain their privileged position atop the labor movement, they not only need the maintenance of capitalism but also benefit from the dominance of their own imperialist bourgeoisie.

The first writings to deal with the relationship between imperialism and opportunism were Lenin's pamphlet *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (written in early 1916), his article "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism" (October 1916), and *The War and the Crisis of Socialism* (August 1916) by Bolshevik leader Gregory Zinoviev. In his book, Zinoviev addressed the question of opportunism in relation to the German Social Democracy:

> "When we speak of the 'treachery of the leaders' we do not say by this that it was a deep-laid plot, that it was a consciously perpetrated sell-out of the workers' interests. Far from it. But consciousness is conditioned by existence, not *vice versa*. The entire social essence of this caste of labor bureaucrats led inevitably, ***through the outmoded pace set for the movement in the 'peaceful' pre-war period***, to complete bourgeoisification of their 'consciousness.' The entire social position into which this numerically strong caste of leaders had climbed over the backs of the working class made them a social group which objectively must be regarded as an agency of the imperialist bourgeoisie."

The German SPD's 4 August 1914 vote for war credits was not some error that could be repaired, as Kautsky claimed, but the full flowering of the development of Social Democracy over the previous couple of decades. Hugo Haase, the SPD national chairman, declared after the vote, "In its hour of peril we shall not abandon the Fatherland." The German Kaiser, gratified, replied: "I no longer know parties, I know only Germans." Thus the national unity drive between the long-growing opportunist wing of the Social Democracy and the German rulers was sealed, and it took the whole party with it. Lenin was absolutely right about the necessity to shatter any alliances with the social-chauvinists. The fact that he fought to break revolutionary workers in Russia from opportunism in all its forms laid the basis for the building of a vanguard party, which has proved to be the absolutely necessary and too often missing component of the struggle for workers power. If not for that, there would have been no Russian Revolution (see the Spartacist pamphlet, *Lenin and the Vanguard Party*).

The First World War

Now, on the question of the changes in the nature of war itself, it's interesting to note Lenin's comments on Luxemburg's 1916 antiwar pamphlet written under the pseudonym of Junius. There were several lines of criticism. One was over a statement in the piece that strongly implied that national wars of liberation were no longer possible under imperialism. This question has been dealt with already in the discussions on revolutionary defensism (see Part One of this article in *Workers Vanguard* No. 795, 17 January). Another major criticism, though, is that in the pamphlet, Luxemburg speaks of defense of the fatherland against invasion, how the right wing of the Social Democracy actually undermined this and left the fatherland unprotected. She wrote that socialists should:

> "oppose the imperialist war programme... with the old, truly national programme of the patriots and democrats of 1848, the programme of Marx, Engels and Lassalle—the slogan of a united, Great German Republic.... Hence, the grave dilemma—the interests of the fatherland or the international solidarity of the proletariat—the tragic conflict which prompted our parliamentarians to side, 'with a heavy heart,' with the imperialist war, is purely imaginary, it is a bourgeois nationalist fiction. On the contrary, there is complete harmony between the interests of the country and the class interests of the proletarian International, both in time of war and in time of peace; both war and peace demand the most energetic development of the class struggle, the most determined fight for the Social-Democratic programme."

Lenin makes the point that the author of the text is clearly a revolutionary, but that approaching the question in that way leaves room for opportunists to maneuver. He explains that "in saying that the class struggle is the best means of defence against invasion, Junius applies Marxist dialectics only half way.... Civil war against the bourgeoisie is also a form of class struggle, and only this form of class struggle would have saved Europe (the whole of Europe, not only one country) from the peril of invasion."

In the Junius Pamphlet, Luxemburg broke only partially from the old social-democratic approach to war and national defense. She harks back to 1848, when national unification and national-democratic struggle against feudal reaction, both internally and externally, were on the order of the day. The SPD right wing, in justifying their vote for war credits, cynically pointed to how Marx and Engels would have in 1848 supported Germany in a war against Russia. In turn, Luxemburg inverted the argument by giving as the theoretical basis for her opposition to the war the outmoded program of 1848—i.e., before the development of imperialism. But as Lenin pointed out:

> "At the present time, the *objective* situation in the biggest advanced states of Europe is different. Progress, if we leave out for the moment the possibility of temporary steps backward, can be made

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First published in 1978, this pamphlet provides a detailed historical and theoretical account of Lenin's struggle for a vanguard party. Includes: "In Defense of Democratic Centralism"

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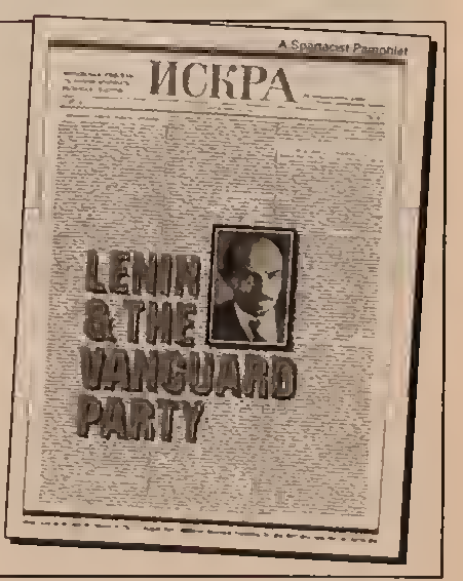

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> only in the direction of *socialist* society, only in the direction of the *socialist revolution*. From the standpoint of progress, from the standpoint of the progressive class, the imperialist bourgeois war, the war of highly developed capitalism, can, *objectively*, be opposed only with a war *against* the bourgeoisie, i.e., primarily civil war for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie....
>
> "Junius came very close to the correct solution of the problem and to the correct slogan: civil war against the bourgeoisie for socialism; but, as if afraid to speak the whole truth, he turned *back*, to the fantasy of a 'national war' in 1914, 1915 and 1916."

How classical Social Democracy regarded defensive and predatory wars is quite different from how we look at the question. In Karl Liebknecht's 1907 book titled *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*, for example, the way he defines the nature of a war is over who fired first. For example, if France and Germany go to war and France initiates it, it would be defensive on the part of Germany and predatory on the part of France. The problem is, you see, the whole nature of war had changed. The compulsion for interimperialist war is not so that France and Germany could annex part of each other's countries. If it were, then one could speak of the defense of Germany against tsarist aggression even in the context of World War I. But it wasn't. Wars between imperialist powers are to divide and re-divide imperialist spheres of influence, to fight over who will dominate the colonial and semicolonial countries. In the process, Germany would attack France and vice versa, but the nature of the war is predatory and reactionary on both sides.

And it is this understanding of imperialism and war that has guided genuine Marxists since World War I. But there are important differences today. Most of the peoples in the dependent world are not now subject to direct colonial rule but to imperialist economic domination through the agency of local bourgeoisies. The collapse of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, in removing a common enemy and point of unity for the imperialists, has meant a resurgence in rivalries between the imperialists similar to the pre-1914 days. But unlike that time, when you had a number of relatively equal Great Powers, today there is a sole superpower.

That situation cannot continue forever, but it does define how the American rulers act, how their imperialist rivals act and how antiwar activists, particularly in Europe, may view their relations with their rulers. For example, the sentiment of pacifism among the working population in a country like Germany, which has lost two world wars, is understandable. Likewise, there is the sense that antiwar activity must centrally be mobilized against American imperialism, since it is American imperialism that is waging most of the wars out there.

We solidarize with those who protest the crimes of U.S. imperialism. But we also warn against any illusions that German imperialism could be a lesser evil than American imperialism. That German imperialism is itself not waging a large scale war against the peoples of the world is largely a product of its military inferiority in contrast to the U.S. Any rectification of this imbalance will necessarily be accompanied by increased austerity and militarization at home, that is, at the expense of the working masses. There is therefore a direct link between opposition to imperialist plunder—plunder carried out by another imperialist power—and defense of working-class interests in a country like Germany.

Bolshevik antiwar agitator addresses Russian troops at the front during World War I. In Latvia, Bolsheviks in the army published "Pravda of the Trenches."

VAAP

Revolutionary Work in the Army

Friedrich Engels' introduction to Marx's *The Class Struggles in France 1848 to 1850* has an extraordinary clause that the right-wing socialists latched onto around the turn of the last century. After talking about the importance of universal suffrage, about how the bourgeoisie came to fear the legal electoral work of the party more than its illegal work, he concludes: "Rebellion in the old style, street fighting with barricades, which decided the issue everywhere up to 1848, had become largely outdated. Let us have no illusions about it: a real victory of insurrection over the military in street fighting, a victory as between two armies, is one of the rarest exceptions." When this was published in the SPD's theoretical journal in 1895, it caused a stir. The right wing interpreted it as Engels saying that violent revolution was impossible, at least in Germany, that what was left was legal parliamentary work. However, when the SPD published the article, they removed its revolutionary content—just edited it out. Engels wrote them a furious letter stating that they made him look like a "good democrat." But that, too, was kept secret.

In fact, Engels makes the point that in the classic time of street fighting, "the barricade produced more of a moral than a material effect. It was a means of shaking the steadfastness of the military. If it held out until this was attained, victory was won; if not, the outcome was defeat. This is the main point which must be kept in view, also when examining the outlook for possible future street fighting." In publishing the article, Bebel and Kautsky took out that last sentence about future street fighting. Connected with this, later in the article Engels makes what may appear to be a cryptic point: that the ancient Roman Empire, in its decay and as it was persecuting Christians, had within its army a growing number of Christians who were extremely useful when they gained power. I.e., having supporters of your program in the military can be very beneficial.

Not knowing about the missing parts of the article, which only got published after the Russian Revolution, in 1907 Karl Liebknecht published *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*. Engels' point was that because of technology and organization, the capitalist armies had grown far too large and powerful to be defeated in street battle. Liebknecht's point was that because of technology and organization, more than ever the capitalist armies rely heavily on the working class for their cannon fodder. These are workers in military uniform, who can be influenced by revolutionary propaganda. The army must be split by winning its proletarian base to the fight for socialism through revolutionary work in the military. And in fact, that's exactly what the Bolsheviks did. There was already mass disaffection in the Russian army, with huge numbers of soldiers deserting by the beginning of 1917. And, it should be noted, Liebknecht's slogan—"the main enemy is at home"—was not initially directed at the workers, but at the soldiers on the front—i.e., turn your guns the other way and go back and join the working class in fighting your main enemy.

The American army today is not a draft army. But it's a unique volunteer army. The U.S. is the most powerful state in the world, and therefore must maintain a strong and large military. And the numbers come from working-class and minority youth. They do this through what we call an economic draft—inducing poor and working-class kids to join the military in return for financial, educational and employment benefits. So, in its composition, the U.S. Army more resembles a draft army than a volunteer one. Marxists are not bloodthirsty fiends who savor the idea of American working-class youth getting killed. Any such deaths are the direct responsibility of the bourgeoisie. But we also stand for the military defeat of U.S. imperialism and understand that such defeats can have profound effects not only on soldiers but also on society at large. As the experience of the Vietnam War shows, the casualties and the hatred for the war among many of the troops resulted in a major meltdown in the American military. The Vietnamese fighters understood this, and issued propaganda especially to black enlisted men such as the following: "U.S. Negro Armymen! You are committing the same ignominious crimes in South Vietnam that the KKK clique is perpetrating against your family at home."

The opening pages of the Junius Pamphlet powerfully capture the scenes on German streets during World War I, once jubilant with patriotic fervor but now depressed with the heavy weight of countless corpses:

> "The show is over. The German sages, the vacillating spirits, have long since taken their leave. No more do trains filled with reservists pull out amid the joyous cries of enthusiastic maidens. We no longer see their laughing faces, smiling cheerily at the people from the train windows. They trot through the streets quietly, with their sacks on their shoulders. And the public, with a disturbed face, goes about its daily tasks.
>
> "In the sober atmosphere of pale daylight there rings out a different chorus: the hoarse croak of the vultures and hyenas of the battlefield.... The patriotic cannon fodder that was loaded into the trains in August and September rots on the battlefields of Belgium and the Vosges, while profits are springing like weeds into the fields of the dead. The harvest must be brought quickly from the barns. From across the ocean a thousand greedy hands want to take part in the plunder."

It was Lenin's Bolshevik Party that understood how to take the justified desire for peace among Russia's working masses and turn it into a struggle for social revolution and working-class power. And in our work on war, we really invent nothing new. We study and learn the lessons of the past in order to be able to intervene into the struggles of today. We know that the mightiest empires can fall, that this terribly arrogant ruling class with its absurd designs of world domination also sits atop a volcano waiting to erupt, that will one day erupt against the exploitation and oppression the mass of the population daily lives through. Our struggle as a fighting propaganda group is to intervene into every situation armed with the revolutionary program of Marxism in order to win over the cadre that can assemble a workers party to sweep away the capitalist system.

Since the destruction of the USSR, the U.S. has grown dizzy with one military success after another, and the current displays of imperialist arrogance are a distillation of that unprecedented string of victories. War is an inevitable part of capitalist imperialism. And if this system remains in place, whatever slaughter may take place in Iraq will soon be overshadowed by the prospect of war between the real powers, including with nuclear weapons. This underlines both the urgency and seriousness of the tasks faced by Marxists—that truly, now more than ever, humanity is faced with the prospect of either socialist liberation or imperialist barbarism. ■

Novosti

7 November 1918: Red Army soldiers parade in Moscow with banner hailing "Communism."

The ICL has long published the above photo with date given as 1917, based on the best documentation available. Recent research, including in the newly accessible Russian State Cinema-Documentation Archives (Krasnogorsk) has led us to conclude that this photo was taken on 7 November 1918, at a Moscow celebration of the first anniversary of the October Revolution.

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Gov. Ryan's Song

Gov. George Ryan, in the last passing days of his first and only term, saved the best for last.

He sent shock waves across the nation when he issued four pardons to men sitting on the Condemned Units of the state's prison system, opening the doors of the dungeon for four men, one who sat in the shadow of the gallows for nearly two decades. Speaking in a soft, Midwestern accent, his words were as damning as the death sentences that his orders negated: "The system is broken."

With these orders, he ushered four men, Stanley Howard, Madison Hobley, Aaron Patterson, and Leroy Orange, from the darkest corners of the land, into the light. Quoting a tale of that famed Illinoisan, Lincoln, he recalled the job of the nation's chief executive, who, reviewing execution orders for those who were convicted of violating the military code during the Civil War, asked one of his generals why one young man had no letters in his file from any who wished his life spared. The General, shrugging his shoulders matter-of-factly, said, "He's got no friends." Lincoln, lifting his pen, remarked, "He's got one friend," and pardoned the man from the clutches of the hangman. Ryan said those four denizens of Death Row, each having been subjected to police torture, falsified confessions, prosecutorial misconduct, and judicial blindness to these vile transgressions, had one friend, and decided to cut the Gordian knot, by issuing full pardons to the four, and proving a friend to men who had few real friends in the dark, deserted abode of death. Before day's end, three of the four walked away from the closed cell of state repression, into the fresh air of a windy Chicago, and freedom.

By so doing, Ryan has dealt a serious, crippling blow to the state system of death, and the inability of the dignitaries and officials of the system, to cure the serious problems of the death penalty, were shown in sharp and stark relief.

It is fitting that Ryan, a one-term, embattled politico, and a non-lawyer ("I'm a pharmacist," he repeatedly explained) would be the one to solve these deep and troubling problems. It is equally as fitting that the problems of the Illinois death system came to light, not through the members of the Bar, but through the meanderings of students of journalism, whose investigations led to the ultimate conclusion voiced by Ryan some years later: "The system is broken."

Hours after his unprecedented announcement of the pardon package, Ryan's office would announce another earth-shattering event: the full commutation of every man on Death Row in the Prairie State. By the end of the week, 167 folks would no longer be on Death Row.

Elected as a conservative Republican who "never gave a moment's thought" to the rightness or morality of the death penalty, Ryan would be the last politician one would expect would strike down the nation's 7th largest Death Row in the United States.

With a hoarse voice, his nervousness evident by his fidgety presentation, the one-term governor struck a mighty blow against the Death System in America.

Exercising a breadth of vision that is truly remarkable in an American sitting (albeit departing) politician, Ryan spoke of the problems facing not just those condemned to death, but in the processes, prosecutions, and judgments affecting those condemned to "life." His words were a rare gubernatorial recognition of the deficits in the system entire: "The system has proven itself to be wildly inaccurate, unjust, unable to separate the innocent from the guilty...and racist."

His commutations of over 150 death sentences, unquestionably stays the cold hand of death, but it does not address the injustices that led many to Death Row, nor keeps them confined on "Life Row," for those problems, those deep cracks in the system, remain.

It is tragically true that, as Ryan charges, "The system is broken." The bitter truth is his efforts, while undeniably noble, and unquestionably historic, does not fix the mess.

To his credit, Ryan assembled a blue-ribbon panel to examine the state's death system, and the commission, after three years, came to a political, yet systematic, conclusion: "The system is broken." The commission, composed of prosecutors, judges, defense lawyers and scholars, joined in the report, and issued some 85 recommendations to "fix" the system, including the recording of confessions, from beginning to end, the end of "jailhouse confessions," (which are notoriously unreliable, yet influential to unknowing jurors), and a host of others. The legislature opted to ignore the recommendations, just as the state's highest judiciary chose to ignore many of the most blatant injustices, and Ryan, the "non-lawyer," felt compelled to act.

If the system is broken, how can the system fix the system?

Ryan's very extraordinary act, seems to suggest, that it cannot. For while those four men are free of unjust convictions, are they the ***only*** four innocents on the state's large Death Row, or larger Life Row? That seems unlikely.

In another sense, as the underlying system remains tightly embedded in place, what of those to come? How many years will other innocents suffer in the suffocating holds of steel and brick slave ships (prisons) before another scandal threatens the stability of the system?

Like the notorious cycle of police corruption cases that plagues U.S. cities, like New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles and—yes—Chicago, the problem isn't fixed, but passed on to later administrations.

It seems an abolition movement must take this, not as a final victory, but as a first step of a systematic battle for real change.

We may all agree that the system is broken. But that mere agreement does not insure that that which is broken will indeed be fixed.

11 January 2003

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Contributions are urgently needed for Mumia's legal defense. Checks made payable to "SEE Mumia Free" should be sent to: Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Death Penalty...

(continued from page 12)

hopeful Senator Joseph Lieberman, who railed that "it did terrible damage to the credibility of our system of justice," and Democratic Chicago mayor Richard Daley, who presided over many of the frame-up prosecutions as Cook County State's Attorney in the 1980s. The current State's Attorney, Richard Devine, also a Democrat, has filed suit to overturn ten of Ryan's commutations. Meanwhile, his office is revving up to fill the vacancies Ryan opened on death row, seeking death sentences in 50 new cases which are heading to trial. Ryan's successor as governor, Chicago Democratic machine hack Rod Blagojevich, called Ryan's move "a gross injustice." In his race for governor, Blagojevich won the endorsement of the Fraternal Order of Police by coming out against Ryan's proposal to require videotaping of all police interrogations, saying it would make it "a lot more harder" to "convict criminals." This is no aberration coming from Democrats; it was the Clinton administration's 1994 omnibus crime bill that expanded the number of offenses punishable by death and drastically curtailed the ability of death row inmates to challenge their convictions.

Among the most vocal Democratic Party opponents of the death penalty have been black politicians like New York's Al Sharpton and Chicago's Jesse Jackson Sr. and Jr., both of whom hailed Ryan's clemency order. The black Democrats posture as defenders of black and minority rights, decrying the "prison-industrial complex" and police brutality. But their aim is to refurbish the credentials of the capitalist "law and order" system by curbing its "excesses" and giving it the appearance of fairness. Jackson Sr. and other liberals promote as an "alternative" to the death penalty the slow death of life without parole. This living hell was described in stark terms by Ryan, who consigned all but a handful of Illinois' former death row inmates to life without parole: "They will be confined in a cell that is about 5-feet-by-12-feet, usually double-bunked. Our prisons have no air conditioning, except at our supermax facility where inmates are kept in their cell 23 hours a day. In summer months, temperatures in these prisons exceed 100 degrees. It is a stark and dreary existence.... Life without parole has even, at times, been described by prosecutors as a fate worse than death."

Also hailing Ryan's decision is the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) and its Campaign to End the Death Penalty (CEDP), which have been active in recent years in pushing for state moratoriums on executions. The ISO/CEDP campaigns are designed to bring in precisely those bourgeois politicians, like Jackson, whose aim is to "fix" this system of racist capitalist *in*justice. Thus, as moratorium campaigns were building in several states a few years ago, the ISO/CEDP dropped their call to abolish the death penalty in favor of the slogan "Moratorium Now, Abolition Next." This was intended to find "common ground" with supporters of the death penalty who were uneasy about the prospect of executing innocent people. In the same light, CEDP spokesman Alice Kim proclaimed, "There shouldn't be a death penalty if there's any chance that innocent people can be executed" (*Socialist Worker*, 26 May 2000).

In echoing the bourgeois liberals, the ISO and its CEDP obscure the class nature of the capitalist state as the instrument of organized violence by the rulers against the exploited and oppressed. As long as the capitalist class remains in power, any gain won by working people, including even abolition of the death penalty, is *reversible*. The death penalty *was* suspended nationally in 1972, as the result of the massive social turmoil created by the civil rights movement and U.S. imperialism's losing war in Vietnam. But as the level of social struggle ebbed in the mid-1970s, the death penalty was brought back with a vengeance.

As we wrote at the time of the first execution following the reinstatement of capital punishment, the death penalty "is one among many proofs of the failure of capitalism in its death agony.... The hangman and the firing squad will not be eliminated through civil libertarian reforms. Only the victorious proletarian revolution that overthrows the bourgeois state will abolish the death penalty for good and smash the prisons in the course of rooting out the whole vicious cycle of crime, punishment and repression caused by capitalism" ("State Butchers Gilmore," *WV* No. 141, 21 January 1977). To get rid of the barbaric state machinery of capitalist rule requires the forging of a workers party, in opposition to the Democratic and Republican parties of capital, to lead the multiracial proletariat to power.■

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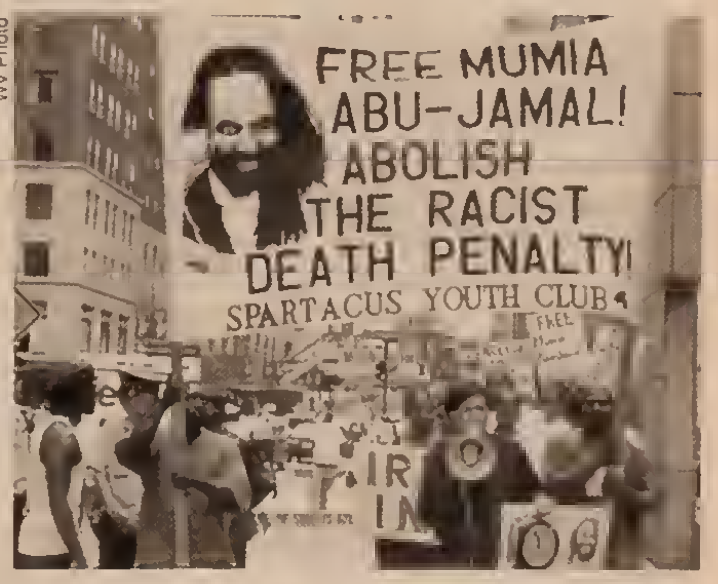

WV Photo

Chicago, August 1995: Emergency protest against threatened execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

significant because, even before a massive escalation of the air war or the beginning of a ground invasion, there is already a high degree of proletarian opposition to war in Europe. Earlier this month, Scottish train drivers engaged in an expressly political antiwar class-struggle action by refusing to deliver war materials slated for the largest NATO weapons depot in Europe. In Italy, the metal workers trade-union federation has announced a political strike the day war begins.

In the U.S., the organizers of the January 18 antiwar protests, Workers World Party's International ANSWER coalition, strive above all to keep their liberal-pacifist movement safe for preachers and Democratic Party politicians. The left liberals and the occasionally left-speaking sham socialists seek the "reform" of capitalism's excesses and a more "humane" imperialism. The "road" to this ersatz utopia is paved by their political subordination to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. Insofar as these Democrats have a different perspective, it is toward supporting the "soft" approach of the United Nations—i.e., to continue the starvation blockade and the weapons inspections and to secure UN mandate for an all-out war. Here, too, the purpose is to stifle and contain any class-struggle opposition to the war.

As we wrote in a statement of the International Communist League (*WV* No. 790, 1 November 2002):

> "The colossal military advantage of the United States against neocolonial Iraq—a country which has already been bled white through 12 years of UN sanctions which have killed more than 1.5 million civilians—underscores the importance of *class struggle* in the imperialist centers as the chief means to give content to the call to defend Iraq. Every strike, every labor mobilization against war plans, every mass protest against attacks on workers and minorities, every struggle against domestic repression and against attacks on civil liberties represents a dent in the imperialist war drive. To put an end to war once and for all, the capitalist system that breeds war must be swept away through a series of revolutions and the establishment of a rational, planned, egalitarian socialist economy on a world scale. ***Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack!***"

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!

The wave of patriotism ignited by the criminal attack on the World Trade Center is receding amid the increasing real miseries and wholesale attacks on democratic rights that confront the American population. At least 42 union locals, 14 district or regional union councils and four national unions have issued some statement of opposition to a war against Iraq. These resolutions are a reflection of growing discontent among workers with the consummately venal Bush administration, which showers billions in tax cuts on their cronies while workers get pink slips and watch their pensions go down the drain. In the last two years alone, official unemployment has jumped by 50 percent, from a rate of 3.9 percent to 6 percent. This does not include the many millions of ghetto and barrio youth who have never found a job in the first place and the millions more long-term unemployed who are not even counted.

WV Photo

New York's health workers union contingent at January 18 D.C. protest.

As the last vestiges of welfare and other social programs are shredded, the number of homeless has skyrocketed in the last two years. And those who do have jobs often find themselves one paycheck away from losing their homes and health coverage. Despite the endless predictions by Wall Street hacks that the recession is finally coming to an end, Brad DeLong, a University of California economist, aptly observed: "2003 doesn't feel good at all for the unemployed, and it doesn't feel very good for the employed" (*New York Times*, 26 January).

Many of the union antiwar resolutions simply oppose unilateral U.S. action against Iraq, i.e., advising that American imperialism proceed under the cover of the UN. Others place opposition to war within the framework of American "democracy," such as a January 14 resolution by the National Executive Board of the American Postal Workers Union which "opposes the pending war with Iraq" and continues that "pre-emptive attacks against sovereign states are not consistent with the principles of freedom and respect for all people."

On January 11, trade unionists from dozens of unions across the country attended a conference in Chicago hosted by Teamsters Local 705, the second-largest in the country, to establish "U.S. Labor Against the War." The result of this gathering was a motion opposing the war which proclaimed that American labor has no quarrel with the ordinary citizens of Iraq, that Bush has failed to make a case that an Iraqi threat exists and that U.S. military action "threatens the peaceful resolution of disputes among states, jeopardizing the safety and security of the entire world." The motion further denounces "the billions of dollars spent to stage and execute this war [which] are being taken away from our schools, hospitals, housing and Social Security," says "Bush's drive for war serves as a cover and distraction for the sinking economy, corporate corruption and layoffs," and condemns "the war [as] a pretext for attacks on labor, civil, immigrant and human rights at home." The conferees resolved to "promote union, labor and community antiwar activity."

Such resolutions are a reflection of the growing dissatisfactions of American workers with their power- and profit-maddened rulers. Moreover, these calls stand as a *partial* rejection of the "national unity" chauvinism that is pledged by the top echelons of the trade-union bureaucracy. While AFL-CIO top John Sweeney has promised to stand shoulder to shoulder with U.S. imperialism in its "war against terror," Teamsters head James Hoffa Jr. is a member of Bush's "Committee for the Liberation of Iraq."

For its part, the Chicago conference was dominated by hoary veterans of the pro-Democratic Party peace crawls that they claim brought an end to the war in Vietnam who now occupy positions in the middle echelons of the labor bureaucracy. A participant at the conference, Joann Wypijewski, approvingly reported in *CounterPunch* (17 January): "The final resolution...includes neither patriotism nor Palestine; it makes no rhetorical flourish on the nature of fundamentalism or capitalism; it neither embraces the UN nor denounces American imperialism." And consciously so.

Invited to speak at the meeting as the obligatory spokesman for bourgeois opposition to the war was one David Cortwright of Keep America Safe/Win Without War, described by Wypijewski as "a mainstream patriotic coalition of Americans who are concerned about Iraq but don't want to go to war." Bill Fletcher, former education director of the AFL-CIO, delivered what has become the ritual incantation in the service of class collaboration: "We have to have a broad level of unity. If we make anti-imperialism the premise of our work then we're building a sect, and I'm too old for that." The aim of such types is not to mobilize labor's social power in concrete acts of class struggle against U.S. imperialism—e.g., political protest strikes against the war or stopping shipments of military goods. Rather their aim is to organize labor as one more constituent of a pro-Democratic Party "peace movement."

The political points that the *CounterPunch* article enthuses were left out of the Chicago resolution are in fact the very basis upon which any genuine proletarian opposition to the war must be mobilized. Workers must be brought to understand that they share no interests with their capitalist bosses; that imperialist war is simply the extension of capitalism's quest for the profits that are solely obtained by the exploitation of labor; that for the imperialists guns *are* butter; that the UN operates solely to perpetuate and enforce the world's domination by the major imperialist powers. On the side of the U.S., the coming war is completely predatory; on the side of Iraq, it is just and defensive. Workers must be won to the military defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialism's neocolonial war, recognizing that this in no way implies any political support to Saddam Hussein, the butcher of his own working people and oppressed.

For America's capitalist rulers, workers are mere fodder for profit at home and war abroad. But precisely because it is the working class that produces the wealth of society, it is the sole force capable of ending imperialist war through overthrowing the capitalist system that spawns war. The defense of Iraq against imperialist attack is integrally linked to the defense of the working masses here against increasing exploitation and oppression. The task is to forge a workers party to educate and mobilize the proletariat with the purpose of abolishing capitalist class rule. And that requires breaking the allegiance of the workers to the class-collaborationist, national-chauvinist labor leaders.

The Lessons of Vietnam

Reformists like WWP/ANSWER and left-talking union bureaucrats hope to recapitulate the "successes" of the Vietnam-era National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC), which was dominated by the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). But it wasn't the peace demonstrations that drove the U.S. out of Vietnam. The Vietnam War had a combined character as both a resistance to imperialist colonial domination and, given the military intervention of the Vietnamese deformed workers state in the North, the prospect of a social overturn of capitalist rule in the South. It was the battlefield victory of the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants that brought an end to the war by defeating U.S. imperialism.

Then as now, it was argued by the antiwar reformists that any course other than "broad"—i.e., class-collaborationist—unity would be "sectarian." The SWP reformists sought to ensure that NPAC would be safe for Democratic Party liberals by imposing a political ban—including by physical force when necessary—on those who sought to advance revolutionary politics. Thus, at a 1971 NPAC conference, the SWP launched a physical attack against the Spartacist League and Progressive Labor Party when we protested the presence of Democratic Senator Vance Hartke. Such repression was not a historical accident. Capitalism's rulers do not countenance proletarian opposition and demand that the social-democratic supporters of the capitalist order "deal" with such opposition.

Today, ANSWER finds itself criticized by the very bourgeois elements it courts for raising such "extraneous" issues as the demand for the release of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. These critics "wish that when it sponsors antiwar rallies, it would confine its message to opposition to the war" (*New York*

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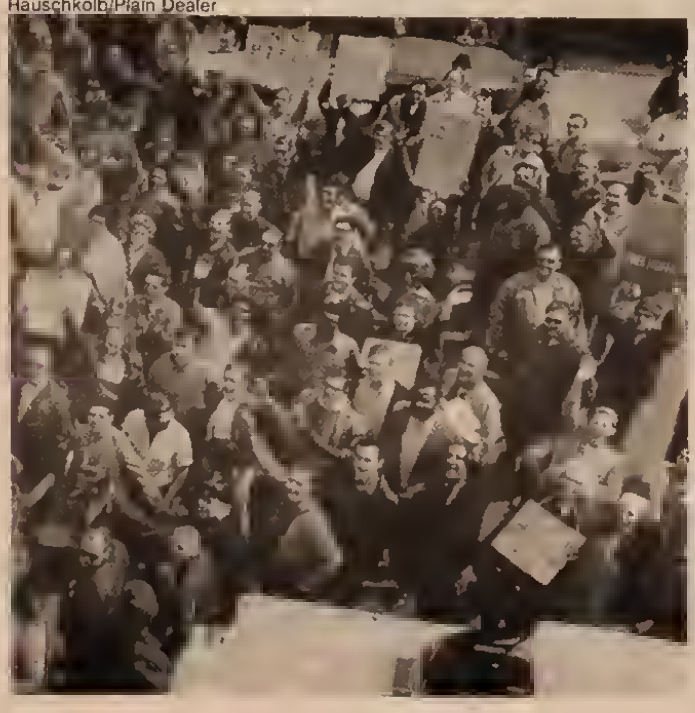

Howard Ruffner

Left: Cleveland Teamsters rally in April 1970 during wildcat that defied strikebreaking by Ohio National Guard which was called out a few weeks later against Kent State students protesting Vietnam War (above), killing four.

Times, 24 January). While the Spartacist League defends the Workers World Party against this redbaiting, we recognize that when push comes to shove, the reformists carry out the liberals' wishes with basehall bats. WWP was certainly not hesitant to use violence and to appeal to the capitalist cops in defense of its class collaborationism against the Spartacist League at the time of mass protests against the U.S. intervention in El Salvador in the early 1980s.

After an April 1967 antiwar march brought out a half-million people in New York City alone, veteran Marxist Isaac Deutscher remarked that one dock strike against the war would have been worth a thousand peace demonstrations. His point was not to dismiss student activism but to point out that the political mobilization of labor prepares the hasis for the overturn of the capitalist system of exploitation, oppression and war.

By the late 1960s there were enormous opportunities for mobilizing class-struggle opposition against the Vietnam War. As the number of American GIs returning in body bags mounted, popular opposition to the war spread from the campuses to the black population and sections of the working class. The heavily black and working-class base of the U.S. military in Vietnam had become semi-mutinous, as measured by the number of officers who were being "fragged" —i.e., killed by their own soldiers. In the U.S., the inflationary effects of the massive war spending and the government's imposition of a wage freeze were fueling large-scale strikes. In 1970, postal workers defied the law and staged the first major strike ever against the federal government. This was followed by a Teamsters wildcat action in Ohio.

The American trade-union bureaucracy was, at that time, dominated by the Cold Warriors who had achieved their posts hy driving the reds who had built the CIO out of the trade unions in the aftermath of World War II. AFL-CIO chief George Meany was a rabidly racist anti-Communist who if anything was to the right of Republican president Richard Nixon in his support for the war. And "progressive" labor leaders like Victor Reuther, one of the CIA's men in purging Communists from the labor movement in Europe and a prominent labor figure at NPAC rallies, voiced opposition to the war in order to defuse labor discontent. Reuther personified the link between the labor movement and the Democratic Party. In the view of social democrats like Reuther, labor opposition was to be confined to their presence on the speaker's stand at antiwar mobilizations.

The Spartacist League called for military victory to North Vietnam and the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front and raised the slogan: "All Indochina must go Communist!" We sought to galvanize the widespread discontent that was expressed through economic strike struggles and to win the working class to political opposition to the war, raising the call for "Labor strikes against the war!" In a 23 March 1970 leaflet directed at the postal strike, we wrote: "The same army that Nixon is threatening to use in breaking the postal strike is being used to suppress the Vietnamese workers and peasants in order to keep Asia safe for American business." When the National Guardsmen initially called out to break the Ohio Teamsters wildcat gunned down four antiwar protesters at Kent State, we explained in a May 1970 leaflet titled "Blood and Nixon":

> "Only the working class, because of its economic power, can lead an effective anti-war struggle. Only the class-conscious workers can lead the struggle to defeat capitalism....
>
> "Workers whose job conditions and falling real wages force them continually into conflict with the bosses must see as essential to their own interests the fight to end the hosses' imperialist war and to break from the bosses' warmonger political parties to form a party of labor. These struggles—like struggles for militant economic demands—will necessitate the replacement of the treacherous union bureaucracies which seek at every turn to tie the workers to the status quo."

Spartacist Ireland

Spartacist Group Ireland at December 7 antiwar demonstration in Dublin.

Only Workers Revolution Can End Imperialist War!

But the class-collahorationist antiwar movement that the likes of ANSWER hark back to embraced the class enemies of the proletariat. As bourgeois opposition to that *losing* imperialist war mounted, finally forcing Nixon to begin withdrawing U.S. troops, the pacifist antiwar movement simply melted away. The thousands upon thousands of youth won to opposition to U.S. imperialism quickly exited the struggle against that system. America's rulers moved to reassert the dominance of their class and their state power with an assault on labor, on the scant gains of the civil rights movement, and on the very ability of the poor to survive. However mad, Bush's declaration of eternal war against all those who dare to oppose the American imperialist order, both at home and abroad, is a simple expression of the logic of the decaying capitalist system.

To intervene into last October's antiwar protests, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs huilt Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents around the slogans: "For class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack! Down with the UN starvation blockade!" As we argued in the mobilizing call for these contingents: "It is futile to oppose war against Iraq hut not oppose the economic system which generates war and the ideology that legitimizes it. Moreover, pushing illusions in the reformability of the bloody American imperialist state can only result in the ***demobilization*** of the only force in capitalist society that can challenge the rule of the capitalist class: the working class."

Today, such bourgeois opposition as exists is, in the main, oriented toward directing U.S. imperialism's attentions against the "real threat," the North Korean deformed workers state, and ultimately against all such societies—China, Vietnam and Cuba—where capitalist rule was overthrown. Self-proclaimed leftists like the International Socialist Organization and the Revolutionary Communist Party now decry the arrogance of the Bush administration in its bid for world domination. But these same groups made their own, albeit pusillanimous, contribution to U.S. imperialism's rise as the world's only "superpower" by supporting the forces of imperialist-backed counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet degenerated workers state, the major counterweight to the untrammelled ambitions of U.S. imperialism.

The Spartacist League seeks to educate and when possible organize the proletariat against imperialist war and in its class interests, which ultimately require the overthrow of capitalism through socialist revolution. Proletarian opposition to the depredations of the imperialist exploiters can, in the words of Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky, be pursued "only through the revolutionary mobilization of the masses, that is, by widening, deepening, and sharpening those revolutionary methods which constitute the content of class struggle in 'peacetime'" ("Learn to Think," May 1938). We fight to forge the internationalist workers party needed to lead the proletariat to power.■

Transit...

(continued from page 12)

fellow worker and in a union fight for safe working conditions! At the time of the deaths of Baby and Antony, we wrote in "New York Transit Workers vs. Union-Busting Austerity" (*WV* No. 792, 29 November 2002):

> "Unsafe procedures should be stopped ***before*** workers are killed or injured! Transit workers must fight for ***elected union safety committees*** with the power to ***shut down any unsafe working conditions on the spot.***"

Such gains, as with any union gains, will not be won in the courts or statehouse, but through the independent mobilization of the working class in its own interest. They will he won not through parading Democratic Party officials like Hillary Clinton—who supports the slave-labor Taylor Law—across speakers' platforms at union events, but through class struggle. But looking to the courts and Democratic Party politicians is precisely the perspective of the TWU bureaucracy—from the "old guard" to the present leadership under Roger Toussaint.

Toussaint used the occasion of the memorial for Bennerson to announce the ratification of his sellout deal with Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) head Peter Kalikow. But this deal which Toussaint brags will bring "dignity" and "respect" to the overwhelmingly black and immigrant transit workers in fact reinforces the deathtrap conditions they already face. This contract, which ties paltry wage increases to "productivity," is a recipe for increased speedup which will mean more workers killed and maimed. Already, transit workers are subjected to "broadbanding"—forcing workers to do jobs they're not trained for—while supervisors routinely impose "standard rate times" (SRTs) for a given task, i.e., cutting corners on safety to decrease the amount of time that jobs are supposed to take. As a transit worker told *WV*, workers are ordered to do dangerous work all the time, putting individuals under tremendous pressure. And when they turn to the union for help, they're often told to do the work and grieve it later.

Transit workers have justly denounced the "plantation justice" of the MTA bosses who are ratcheting up disciplinary measures to squeeze ever more out of a workforce increasingly composed of minorities. These workers face the same type of "justice" outside work as they run a daily gauntlet of racist cops brutally enforcing "law and order." In the first two days of this year alone, the NYPD shot dead four people, three of them black youth. And today immigrant workers are a particular target for victimization as the government steps up its racist roundups and detentions in the name of "fighting terror."

Janell Bennerson died because the transit bosses, eyes fixed on the bottom line, could care less about the lives of workers. And this is certainly something not lost on the overwhelming majority of the TWU Local 100 membership. Even in the face of massive fines and other penalties carried by the strikebreaking Taylor Law, over 10,000 workers at two mass meetings unanimously voted to strike. Despite the workers being atomized through a mail-ballot vote on the contract, nearly 40 percent voted against. And the seething anger of the ranks in any case had little outlet, as no alternative to the Toussaint leadership was offered either by the venal "old guard" or hy such putative oppositionists as the "Rank and File Advocate" group who boosted the Toussaint leadership to power.

It will take some hard class struggle to fight for safe working conditions and defend the very lives of workers from the transit bosses. Such a struggle should be linked to a fight against the Taylor Law, which makes it illegal for the TWU to strike. It should be linked to the fight for union jobs with full union wages, benefits and protections for the most vulnerable members of the workforce—WEP workers, provisionals, new-hires and apprentices. But such a fight requires a union leadership that understands that the interests of workers and bosses can never be reconciled; a union leadership that relies on the social power of the workers, rather than appealing to Democratic Party politicians; a union leadership that will fight to link the social power of the black and immigrant workers in the TWU to the defense of the impoverished masses in the ghettos and barrios. The struggle to forge such a leadership will be key to the building of a revolutionary workers party that will bring to power those whose labor creates the wealth through overthrowing the rule of those who currently expropriate the fruits of this labor. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

As NYC Transit Workers Seethe Over Sellout Contract

More Blood on the Tracks

For Elected Union Safety Committees!

Janell Bennerson, a 39-year-old black conductor working the A line on January 18, died a horrifying death when her head struck the bars of an eight-foot-high gate on the platform of the Aqueduct/North Conduit Ave. station. Her hat, scarf and safety glasses were found on the platform after the accident. Bennerson is survived by her longtime companion and 16-year-old daughter.

This gruesome death was industrial murder, which even the most elementary safety precautions would have prevented. The gate was not marked to alert conductors of its presence and extended to approximately eight inches from the window through which Bennerson was leaning as the train left the station.

The transit bosses are blaming Bennerson for her own death, with one transit official claiming she "failed" to keep her head inside the train car as it pulled out (*Newsday*, 20 January). Moving into damage control mode, the transit bosses reduced the fence's height to three feet by the next day as they continue to "investigate" the incident.

Bennerson is the third transit worker to be killed on the job in the last three months. In November, two maintenance workers, Joy Antony and Kurien Bahy, were killed in the space of two days due to unsafe working conditions. Grotesquely, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 president Roger Toussaint alibied the company's callous attitude to workers' safety, declaring that recent deaths in the industry had to do "with the extremely hazardous nature of the work we do." He further stated that car door trouble, which is what likely led to Bennerson leaning out her window in the first place, "comes with the territory."

NY Daily News

Janell Bennerson

Any time that a transit worker is killed on the job, the workforce should lay down its tools in honor of its slain

continued on page 11

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Illinois Governor Empties Death Row

CHICAGO—In a stunning indictment of state-sanctioned murder, Illinois governor George Ryan ordered a blanket clemency for the state's death row inmates on January 11, commuting 167 death sentences to life without parole, or, in three cases, lesser terms. The day before, he pardoned four other death row prisoners outright, three of whom walked out of prison that day.

As Marxists, we oppose the racist death penalty in principle—for the guilty as well as the innocent. We do not accord the state the right to say who lives and who dies. We welcome Ryan's blanket clemency order, and any other measure curtailing the barbaric death penalty, just as we oppose any move to expand and intensify the repressive powers of the capitalist state.

A conservative Republican, Ryan explained that he had taken office as "a firm believer in the American System of Justice and the death penalty." "I never intended to be an activist on this issue. I watched in surprise as freed death row inmate Anthony Porter was released from jail," Ryan said, referring to the case of a mentally retarded black man who was released after his frame-up was exposed in 1999. "He was 48 hours away from being wheeled into the execution chamber where the state would kill him. It would all be so antiseptic and most of us would not have even paused, except that Anthony Porter was innocent of the double murder for which he had been condemned to die."

It was the Porter case—and those of 12 others freed from death row after proving their innocence—that prompted Ryan to declare a moratorium on executions three years ago and appoint a commission to find remedies to "fix" the death penalty. In his January 11 speech, Ryan declared:

> "It is difficult to see how the system can be fixed when not a single one of the reforms proposed by my Capital Punishment Commission has been adopted. Even the reforms the prosecutors agree with haven't been adopted. So when will the system be fixed? How much more risk can we afford? Will we actually have to execute an innocent person before the tragedy that is our capital punishment system in Illinois is really understood?"

Cherney/Chicago Tribune

AP

Leroy Orange (left) and Aaron Patterson (far right), two of four death row inmates pardoned by Illinois governor George Ryan.

Innocent people have been executed and will continue to be executed until the death penalty is abolished. This was sanctified by the Supreme Court in 1993, when it rejected an appeal by Texas inmate Leonel Herrera to hear evidence that another man had confessed to the murder he was convicted of. Herrera was executed later that year. Frame-ups and racist victimizations by the cops and courts are integral to the American legal system, which is designed to serve the interests of the capitalist ruling class against the working people and oppressed of this country. And in racist America, this means that the prison population is overwhelmingly black and Hispanic. In emptying Illinois' death row, Ryan pointed out: "Of the more than 160 death row inmates, 35 were African American defendants who had been convicted or condemned to die by all-white juries. More than two-thirds of the inmates on death row were African-American."

Exemplifying the racist death penalty in the U.S. is the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther Party member and MOVE supporter who was framed up for the 1981 murder of a Philadelphia cop, and then sentenced to death because of his outspoken opposition to racist oppression. Over a year after Jamal's death sentence was overturned by a federal judge, and nearly two years after the confession of the man who really killed the cop was filed in state and federal courts, Jamal remains on death row. ***Free Mumia now!***

It is notable that even as the Bush administration wields the spectre of terrorism to whip up support for augmenting the state's repressive powers, there is continuing apprehension among large sectors of the population toward the application of the death penalty. This has largely been propelled by the highly publicized cases of ***over 100 innocent people*** who were falsely convicted and sentenced to death but freed in recent years, mostly due to DNA evidence. Expressing a concern shared by a number of politicians, novelist and lawyer Scott Turow, a member of Ryan's death penalty commission, wrote in a *New York Times* (17 January) op-ed piece that "the risk of undermining Americans' faith in the legal process... may be the most compelling reason for those who now favor the death penalty to reconsider their position."

All four of the men Ryan pardoned—Stanley Howard, Aaron Patterson, Madison Hobley and Leroy Orange—were victims of Chicago's notorious Area Two police torture chamber in the 1980s. Headed by Commander Jon Burge, who learned his "interrogation techniques" as an MP during the Vietnam War, the Area Two cops routinely secured confessions by hooking live electrical wires to the testicles of black "suspects," or suffocating them with plastic typewriter covers. Patterson was convicted for a 1986 double murder based in large part on a phony confession squeezed out of him by the Chicago cops. He had the presence of mind to scratch a chilling message into a bench in the interrogation room: "Aaron lied—4/30—Police threaten me with violence—slapped and suffocated me with plastic—signed false statement to murders." But even after a defense investigator managed to get a photograph of the message on the bench, Patterson remained on death row. Outrageously, Illinois authorities are sticking Patterson with a three-year parole term for an unrelated conviction, forcing him to wear an electronic monitoring bracelet.

Ryan's blanket clemency was met with howls of protest by Democratic presidential

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 797 | 14 February 2003

U.S. Navy

Down With U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!

FEBRUARY 11—Over 100,000 U.S. troops, four aircraft carriers and some 300 warplanes are already in the Persian Gulf region, while the Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier and 15,000 soldiers of the 101st Airborne are speeding to the Gulf. Hall of Kuwait has been turned into a U.S. military zone, off limits to its own population. The Iraqi people, who suffered tens of thousands dead in the first Desert Slaughter and 1.5 million more from the imperialist sanctions, now face a massive bombing blitz and invasion. The Pentagon plans to unleash ten times as many precision-guided bombs and missiles in the first 48 hours of the coming war than during the first two days of the 1991 war. The war criminals in Washington are openly contemplating the use of nuclear weapons against Iraq.

Last week, Secretary of State Colin Powell presented the United Nations Security Council with a case for invasion that would have embarrassed even a Texas prosecutor: fuzzy photographs, scratchy recordings of purported phone transmissions and drawings by Pentagon "artists" depicting their vision of Iraqi "deception" in hiding supposed "weapons of mass destruction."

With consummate chutzpah, Powell also fell back on the oft-repeated claim that Iraq's Saddam Hussein tested chemical weapons on his own people. Beginning in the 1930s, for 40 years the U.S. government conducted the infamous "Tuskegee Experiment" in which some 400 Southern black men with syphilis were left untreated so Washington's Dr. Mengeles could watch how the disease ravaged their bodies. As for Powell's claim that Al Qaeda is operating in Iraq, according to U.S. intelligence, Al Qaeda is operating in at least 62 countries, including the U.S. Two days after Powell's speech, it was revealed that an "intelligence dossier" on Iraq prepared by the British government was largely plagiarized from a doctoral thesis and magazine articles going back over 12 years.

AP

Students at Baghdad campus demonstrate against UN weapons inspectors. UN inspections are prelude to all-out assault on Iraq by U.S. imperialists.

When War Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrived in Europe last week, he was greeted by huge antiwar protests. The overwhelming majority of Europeans oppose any war against Iraq. In Tony Blair's Britain, the leaders of five of the biggest unions, including the Communication Workers and the ASLEF rail workers, announced yesterday that there could be "massive" strikes when Iraq is attacked.

Meanwhile, tensions between the U.S. and France and Germany are intensifying. Yesterday, France, Germany and Belgium vetoed a U.S. plan to move NATO war materials to Turkey, which the U.S. intends to use as a launching pad for an invasion of Iraq from the north. But any who may hope that the UN or the U.S.'s European imperialist rivals will do anything to stop a war will be sorely disappointed. While the French government mouths opposition to an immediate war, it has dispatched an aircraft carrier to the Mediterranean and is retrofitting munitions to be compatible with U.S. weapons, fearing it will be cut out when the U.S. takes control of Iraq and its oil. France's position was captured by a London *Financial Times* (7 February) headline: "Careful Language Leaves Paris Room to Get Off the Fence."

The vultures are already circling over the dead bodies of the Iraqi people. Turkey has been given the green light by the U.S. to occupy northern Iraq. U.S. imperialism's proclamations of "liberating" Iraq are more than belied by its plans to use the Turkish army—notorious for its brutal war of annihilation against Kurdish separatists in Turkey—in Iraq's Kurdish regions. The U.S. has already outlined plans for a long-term occupation of Iraq beginning with open U.S. military rule and ending with an Iraqi puppet regime.

The Bush administration's ceaseless attacks on workers and minorities in the U.S. make it crystal-clear that the

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The Long Arm of the Bush White House

Protest Ban on NYC Antiwar March!

The following is a statement issued by the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on February 11.

As the rulers prepare to launch a war of annihilation of tens of thousands of Iraqis in the name of "freedom," a federal court has banned the right of antiwar activists to march in New York City. The court not only denied the application by the United for Peace and Justice coalition to march past the United Nations on February 15—an international day of antiwar protest—but endorsed the NYPD's right to ban *any* protest march at any time in the streets of Manhattan. In issuing her decision, the judge asserted, "The Court will not second guess or substitute its judgment for that of the NYPD."

Making the cops the final arbiters of whether the population is allowed to exercise its constitutional rights is a perfect rationale for a police state. And that's what the streets of New York City are already beginning to look like. With the Bush administration declaring a "code orange," the "second highest security alert," cops with their fingers on the triggers of machine guns have been deployed throughout the city. In an extraordinary move, the federal government itself intervened to ensure a ban on any antiwar march in the city, threatening that if the judge ruled in favor of the protesters the government would take legal action.

Through its intimidation tactics in the courts and its armed police thugs on the streets, the government hopes to frighten people into staying at home

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Protest NYC Ban...

(continued from page 1)

with their shades drawn while U.S. bombers obliterate Iraq. And if people come out to protest, as upwards of 100,000 are expected to do, the NYPD plans to herd them into a series of tightly controlled pens surrounded by heavily armed cops. This is a setup for cop attacks and violence against the antiwar protesters.

In 1999 when the Partisan Defense Committee initiated a labor/black mobilization against the racist terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan, these same forces attempted to stop us and the thousands of working people who had rallied to our call to "Stop the KKK!" We fought back, and on 23 October 1999 at least 8,000 people turned out to stop this provocation. The mobilization was guarded by a disciplined team of trade-union marshals representing the social power of labor, not herded into a police pen trap.

Today, the court's assault on fundamental democratic rights like freedom of speech and assembly should be met with a defiant and enormous mass protest ***against the war at home and abroad!***

African immigrant Amadou Diallo was cut down by cops in a hail of 41 bullets in the name of the "war on drugs." If the NYPD can do this with handguns, imagine what they can do with machine guns. Now it's the "war on terror." First they came to round up and incarcerate immigrants of Near Eastern and South Asian descent. Then they declared that anyone Bush determines to be an "enemy combatant" could be stripped of constitutional rights and effectively disappeared. The latest plans are to expand the USA-Patriot Act to strip citizenship from anyone Bush & Co. decree to be aiding "terrorists."

The court decision banning the New York City antiwar march invokes the "code orange" terrorism alert. This is an open declaration that any opposition to the U.S. rulers' war moves can be criminalized as potential "terrorism." As popular opposition to the impending war mounts, the government is taking a step toward outlawing *any* protest against the Iraq war. But it doesn't end there. When the longshoremen's union on the West Coast was locked in a showdown with union-busting shipping bosses, the government intervened to threaten that any strike action by the workers would be a threat to "national security" and then brought down the slave-labor Taft-Hartley law. When New York transit workers voted to go on strike, the media screamed that they were launching a "jihad" and the strikebreaking Taylor Law was invoked. Firefighters who lost over 300 of their comrades trying to save people in the World Trade Center are declared a "clear and present danger to the security of the United States" in a letter signed by Republican House majority leader Tom DeLay because they are unionized!

Nagle/NYTimes

Argentina under military rule? No, it's New York City as government invokes "code orange" terror scare to deploy heavily armed cops throughout city.

In banning the New York City march and turning the streets into police occupation zones worthy of a Latin American dictatorship, it is the government, its courts and cops who represent a "clear and present danger" to the population. On February 9 last year in Oakland, longshoremen were at the core of a labor-centered protest initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for Social Defense in opposition to the government's anti-immigrant witchhunt and its "anti-terrorism" laws. More and larger such mobilizations, centered on the power of the working class, are needed to defend all our rights! Down with the ban on the New York City anti-war march! ■

Marxism, Science and Technology

TROTSKY

LENIN

Under capitalism the mass of the world's population is forced to languish in misery and want while scientific advances are used largely to strengthen the imperialist war machine. In a 1926 radio broadcast in the Soviet Union, Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the 1917 October Revolution, noted how under proletarian rule the development of science and technology will open the door to the most far-ranging improvement of the conditions of humanity.

Just as inside the hull of a steamship impenetrable partitions are placed so that in the event of an accident the ship will not sink all at once, so also in man's consciousness there are numberless impenetrable partitions: in one sector, or even in a dozen sectors, you can find the most revolutionary scientific thinking; but beyond the partition lies philistinism of the highest degree. This is the great significance of Marxism, as thought that generalizes all human experience: that it helps to break down these internal partitions of consciousness through the integrity of its world outlook....

Technology and science develop not in a vacuum but in human society, which consists of classes. The ruling class, the possessing class, controls technology and through it controls nature. Technology in itself cannot be called either militaristic or pacifistic. In a society in which the ruling class is militaristic, technology is in the service of militarism.

It is considered unquestionable that technology and science undermine superstition. But the class character of society sets substantial limits here too. Take America. There, church sermons are broadcast by radio, which means that the radio is serving as a means of spreading prejudices. Such things don't happen here, I think—the Society of Friends of Radio watches over this, I hope? Under the socialist system science and technology as a whole will undoubtedly be directed against religious prejudices, against superstition, which reflect the weakness of man before man or before nature. What, indeed, does a "voice from heaven" amount to when there is being broadcast all over the country a voice from the Polytechnical Museum?

—Leon Trotsky, "Radio, Science, Technology, and Society" (March 1926), printed in *Problems of Everyday Life* (Monad Press [1973])

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Sponsored by: Labor Black League for Social Defense

Sunday, February 23, 3 p.m.

BAY AREA

1634 Telegraph, 3rd floor, Oakland
For more information: (510) 839-0851

Down With the Attacks on Civil Liberties and the Racist War on Immigrants and Blacks!

For Class Struggle Against Racist U.S. Imperialist Rulers!

Saturday, February 22, 3 p.m.

NEW YORK CITY

Columbia University
Hamilton Hall, Rm. 517
(Take 1 or 9 to 116th St. stop)
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A Revolutionary Program for Fighting Imperialist War

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8 St.Mary's Street, Room 205
For more information: (617) 666-9453

WORKERS VANGUARD

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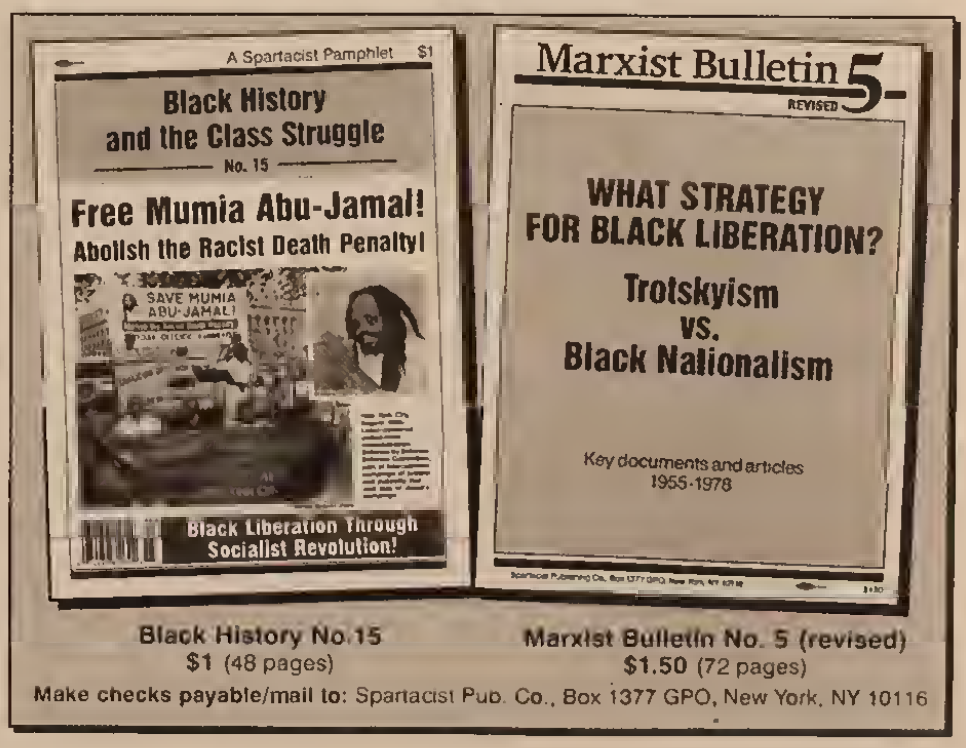

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IG on ILWU and NYC Transit

Worthless Pilots in Stormy Weather

James P. Cannon, the founding leader of American Trotskyism, once remarked that in debating leftist opponents who practice misrepresentation, literary forgery and outright lies, one felt more the need for hip boots and a shovel than a pen. This more than accurately describes our sentiment in having to respond to the manifestly fraudulent and dimwitted slanders that the Internationalist Group (IG) continues to hurl against our organization. But as Cannon noted, however distasteful it may be, such a task is in the line of our duty as Marxists. The fight to build a revolutionary leadership of the proletariat means struggling not only against the current misleaders in the labor bureaucracy but also against those who claim to offer a revolutionary alternative.

Ever since the tiny coterie of those who now head the IG defected from our organization, they have loudly proclaimed themselves to be the sole repository of our revolutionary heritage on the face of the planet. And this could be a point of confusion for those who are looking for a program of struggle against the depredations of capitalist imperialism.

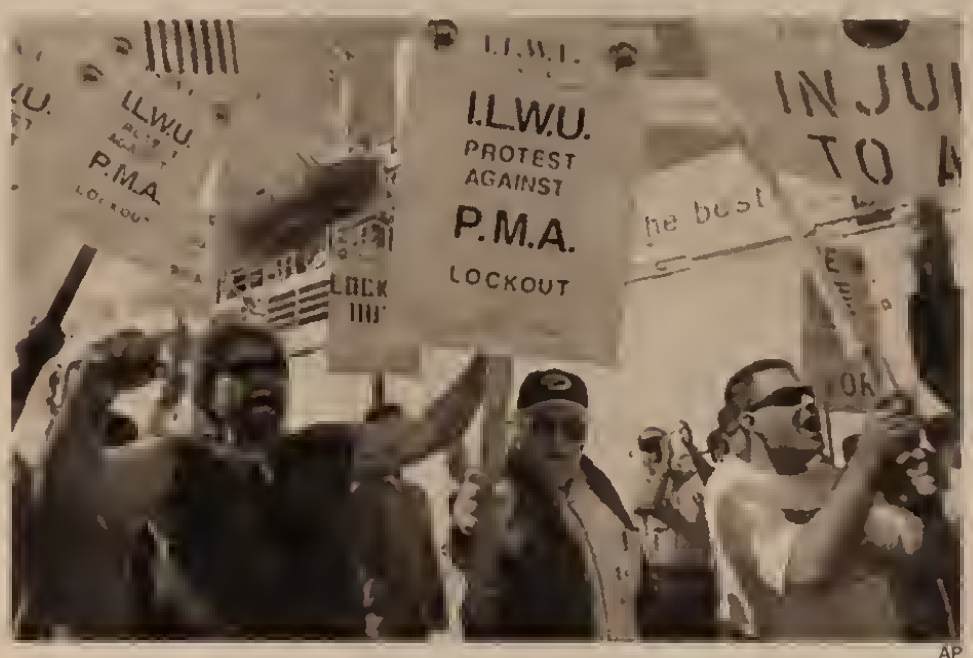
In cyberspace, the IG issues thundering cries for the defeat of U.S. imperialism, more often than not investing forces very distant from Trotskyism, much less the proletariat, with the capacity to accomplish this task. To the unwary this could sound very enticing indeed. But as V. I. Lenin, the leader of the only successful workers revolution in history, noted in his article "The Revolutionary Phrase" (21 February 1918): "By revolutionary phrase-making we mean the repetition of revolutionary slogans irrespective of objective circumstances at a given turn in events, in the given state of affairs obtaining at the time. The slogans are superb, alluring, intoxicating, but there are no grounds for them."

Currently, the IG is making much of its intervention at a "National Labor Conference Against Taft-Hartley and Union-Busting" held on December 7 in San Francisco as against the "demoralized outlook" of the Spartacist League. In an article titled "SL: Hard to Starboard" (*The Internationalist*, January-February 2003), they take us to task for not bellying up and forking over the $25-a-head to enter this conference and intervening from the floor. Asking "Was this abstention some kind of 'ultraleft sectarianism'?" the article answers: "Far from it. In fact, the SL's line on the longshore conflict is a telling example of its rapid motion to the right."

But this conference had little to nothing to do with the conflict that saw the Bush administration come down against the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) with the slave-labor Taft-Hartley law in the name of "national security." The IG itself admits that "overall the conference was a talk shop for union bureaucrats who wanted to blow off steam but opposed any real mobilization of the power of labor against Taft-Hartley and imperialist war." Yet they go on to tout their participation in the "talk shop" as if they were in the trenches of the class struggle.

The Internationalist reprints the leaflet it put out specially for this event and the text of the remarks made by IG leader Abram Negrete. Strutting and fretting his five minutes on the stage, Negrete issued pronouncements calling on the ILWU to "hot-cargo" (refuse to handle) war matériel and strike against Taft-Hartley and for longshoremen to rip up the contract deal which, by the time of the conference, had been agreed to by the top union leadership (and which the membership had not even seen). It was truly a tale full of sound and fury, signifying nothing given that the instrumentality for implementing such demands, i.e., the ranks of the union, were in their overwhelming majority decidedly absent from this conference.

The IG contrasts this performance with the supposed "hard" right turn of the Spartacist League, a charge they try to substantiate by citing a 17 October statement written by...themselves! Titled "Defend Iraq—Defeat U.S. Imperialism!" the 17 October IG statement boasts that its members were "present on the dock workers' picket lines in Oakland daily during the lockout" of the ILWU by the PMA shipping bosses in October. From here it goes on to declare that in contrast, "the SL was barely present at the picket lines and its propaganda ducked every single issue in which the dock workers' struggle intersected the war!"



AP

ILWU picket line stops attempt to move ship out of Port Hueneme near Los Angeles during lockout last fall.

This statement was such a demonstrable *lie* to anyone who had read our propaganda that the IG dared not try to peddle it in two prior leaflets they handed out on the docks, where hundreds of longshoremen bought our paper from our members on the picket lines. The IG completely dropped the statement from its "Hard to Starboard." Here, they simply cite the following, taken from their 17 October piece:

> "The Spartacist League 'failed to mention the issue of war-materiel, much less call to boycott it.... Nor did the front-page article in *Workers Vanguard* (4 October) utter a word of criticism of union leader Jim Spinosa, who tried to introduce flag-waving "anti-terrorist" slogans...; nor, for that matter did it call on dock workers to defy the Taft-Hartley injunction which was clearly in the works, or urge that the rest of the working class undertake strike action against the slave labor law'."

The article goes on to declare with feigned astonishment, "This silence is all the more striking because only a month beforehand, the Spartacist League had highlighted the issue of war materiel, criticizing the ILWU tops for 'cynical empty words' about the war on Iraq, because they 'have sworn in advance that they will continue to load military shipments in the event of a strike' (*WV*, 6 September)."

Actually we fought to mobilize the union against the government's "war on terror" months before the contract battle began. A contingent of longshoremen were at the core of our labor-centered protest in Oakland last February 9, which was called around the demands "No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act! Down with the anti-immigrant witchhunt!" This protest was a real, if modest, demonstration *in action* of a class-struggle program in opposition to the class collaborationism of the union bureaucracy and the racial and ethnic hostilities it foments that are a critical barrier to class consciousness and struggle. And as the hundreds of longshoremen who have bought our press know, this was exactly the program we put forward in issue after issue of *Workers Vanguard* throughout the contract battle.

Political Sanitation

For all its calls for militant "fightback" by the ILWU, the IG's audience has not been the membership of the union, where *WV* readers would be quick to see through their lies. On the contrary, the IG peddled its wares in the shadow of the union bureaucracy and the swamp of the Bay Area reformist left at the Taft-Hartley conference, and otherwise to play to the uninitiated on the World Wide Web. Nonetheless we must, as Cannon put it, get out our shovel for the simple reason that we *are* serious about arming the working class with the consciousness, confidence and fighting spirit needed to wage real combat against the capitalist class enemy and winning a new generation of youth to this purpose. To that end we offer the following, albeit necessarily partial, record of some of our propaganda addressed to the ILWU contract battle:

• "ILWU: Union Gains Under the Gun" (*WV* No. 784, 12 July 2002): "It could not be clearer that longshoremen must be mobilized in action to beat back these attacks. Instead the ILWU leadership has mobilized the rank and file to salute the flag, abjectly reassuring the capitalist rulers that the last thing they want is class struggle.... Spinosa & Co. closed ranks behind the 'war on terror' last fall, when they endorsed the call for increased security on the waterfront and proposed that longshoremen be its guardians."

• "ILWU Threatened by 'National Unity' Crusade" (*WV* No. 785, 9 August 2002): "At the same time that it's on its knees before the PMA, the ILWU leadership pursues the utterly futile strategy of lobbying the capitalist Democratic Party.... In the midst of an economic recession and with an aggressively hostile government, the longshoremen are indeed in a tough position. But it is false to think that if you just keep your head down, they'll leave you alone. There's no hope if the union surrenders its power in advance. Every concession won by the workers took hard struggle against the bosses and their government. A prerequisite is to remove the roadblocks to class struggle, beginning by waging a political fight against the present labor leadership, which sees the world through the same lens as the ruling class and whose purpose is to ensure the subordination of the workers to the 'national interests' of the enemy class."

• "Bush Steps Up Threats Against ILWU" (*WV* No. 786, 6 September 2002): "Any move to use the military to break the ILWU could very well trigger a popular backlash in support of the union. The need would be posed to mobilize the entire labor movement in defense of the longshoremen.

"But this requires a fight against the policies of the labor misleadership that has ***pledged loyalty to the government's 'war on terror' at home and abroad*** that serves as the pretext for the capitalists' attack on the ILWU.... Thus Spinosa & Co. are directly aiding the capitalists who

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Spartacus Youth Club Forums & Classes

BOSTON

Tuesday, 7 p.m.

February 18: **The Marxist Understanding of Class Society, the Family and Women's Oppression**

Boston University, George Sherman Union Smoking Lounge

Information and readings: (617) 666-9453 or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

February 18: **On the Origins of Women's Oppression**

University of Chicago, Cobb Hall 5811 S. Ellis, Room TBA

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441 or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

March 1: **The Fight Against Capitalist Counterrevolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215 (Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239 or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

February 18: **U.S. Imperialism Is the World's Biggest Oppressor—Defend Iraq!**

Columbia University 306 Hamilton Hall

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025 or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

March 5: **Capitalism and Women's Oppression—For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

University of Toronto Sidney Smith, Room TBA 100 St. George Street

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138 or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m.

February 25: **For Unconditional Military Defense of North Korea, China, Vietnam, Cuba! For Workers Political Revolution Against Stalinist Bureaucratism!**

University of British Columbia Student Union Building, Room 211

Information and readings: (604) 687-0353 or e-mail: tllt@look.ca

(In the event of a UBC Teaching Assistant strike, call for location change.)

Visit the ICL Web Site: www.icl-fi.org

Science and the Battle Against Racism and Obscurantism

In Honor of Stephen Jay Gould

Terrence McCarthy

Renowned paleontologist and author Gould powerfully exposed pseudo-sclentific justifications for racism.

It is hardly news that racism is alive and well in America. This was amply demonstrated by the pro-segregationist accolades heaped upon the not-yet-late Strom Thurmond by former Senate Republican leader Trent Lott (see "Undead Racist Zombies of Mississippi (And Beyond)," *WV* No. 794, 3 January). And it's not just the racist ravings of bourgeois politicians. Racial oppression today can be seen in the daily life of black people—from racist cop terror to unemployment and more.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, white-supremacist ideology, with the patina of religious sanction, was used by the slave-owners to justify black chattel slavery. Today, black oppression is the legacy of the unfinished business of the Civil War, the Second American Revolution which abolished slavery. The Civil War was followed by Radical Reconstruction, which promised full equality for black people. But as codified in the Compromise of 1877, the promises of Radical Reconstruction were cast aside by the Northern bourgeoisie—the magnates of industry, transport and banking who derived their profits from the exploitation of "free labor"—in its deal with the Southern landholders.

The racist ideology of the Old South was carried over to justify the new conditions of exploitation of the black freedmen, most of whom became sharecroppers on the former plantations. With the withdrawal of Northern troops after 1877, racial oppression was literally the law under the political structure of Jim Crow segregation, enforced by the official police and the extralegal terror of the KKK. It wasn't until the struggles of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s that the legal institutions of Jim Crow were overturned in the South.

The ideology of racism also played a key role for the United States as it emerged as an imperialist power around the turn of the last century. American military interventions abroad—such as the invasion of the Philippines in the 1898 Spanish-American War—were justified on the basis of the "white man's burden," i.e., that white America had a mission to "civilize" the dark-skinned "savages" of the world. Today, the language may be a bit less crude but the same pretext is used, as evidenced by U.S. imperialism's coming bloody war to "liberate" Iraq.

The fight against black oppression is a strategic question of the American workers revolution. Our program of revolutionary integrationism is based on the pioneering work of Richard Fraser in the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party in the 1950s. Revolutionary integrationism is counterposed to the liberal notion that black people can achieve real social equality under capitalism. Rather, it is based on the understanding that the racial oppression of black people is rooted in the American capitalist system. Fraser argued that American blacks are an oppressed race-color caste, forcibly segregated at the bottom of capitalist society. But that bottom layer includes a substantial number of black workers organized in powerful unions, from the auto industry to transport; i.e., black people are not just victims of racial oppression but, as a strategic sector of the multiracial working class, have real social power.

The ruling class will always use racial, ethnic, sexual, religious and other divisions within the working class to prevent the proletariat from uniting against its common enemy, the bourgeoisie. Overcoming the poisonous racism that divides the working class is a critical task of the multiracial vanguard party which will lead the U.S. proletariat in a social revolution to abolish the capitalist system. The fight for black freedom in America is thus strategic for the emancipation of all of labor and the oppressed. Only the seizure of power by the workers will open the road to the construction of an egalitarian socialist society. And only then will racial oppression and the myriad other abominations of capitalism be cast into the rubbish bin of history.

Debunking "Scientific" Racism: Gould vs. Biological Determinism

The same ideology used to justify anti-black racism in the 19th century was used to justify the anti-immigrant hysteria of the early 20th century. And this was given full backing by the scientific establishment. It is therefore appropriate to honor the contributions of a man who throughout his life conscientiously opposed the "scientific" racist theories of biological determinism. That man was Stephen Jay Gould, renowned paleontologist and author who died of cancer on 20 May 2002.

Gould was a rare breed. Ignoring the disdain of assorted snobbish members of academia, he, like the late Carl Sagan, believed that a serious scientist could and also should communicate his ideas to a broad audience. Despite an earlier bout with cancer and the overwhelming demands on his time for research and teaching, Gould produced finished copy from his manual typewriter for his essay column "This View of Life" in the magazine *Natural History*—*every* issue for 25 years!

For us Marxists, Gould's greatest political work was *The Mismeasure of Man*, originally published in 1981. This book is a magnificent gift to anyone interested in fighting inequality. In it, Gould exposes the various historical proofs of "scientific" racism based on consciously—or worse, unconsciously—twisted data that have been used to justify existing racial prejudices and the lording of one class, race and sex over another. On the title page, Gould quotes Charles Darwin: "If the misery of our poor be caused not by the laws of nature, but by our institutions, great is our sin."

As Gould shows, the history of the IQ test is particularly revealing because Alfred Binet, its French inventor, developed the test for benevolent reasons: to identify children who needed extra attention. Transplanted to the U.S. at the turn of the 20th century, amid the rise of American imperialism, the testing of "intelligence" to obtain a single quantifiable number—an "intelligence quotient" or IQ—was used to reinforce racist and anti-immigrant governmental policies, particularly the imposition of quotas against immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe. From the turn of the century through the 1920s, the eugenics movement dominated the American biological scientific mainstream, with its fear of the "Nordic" American stock being bred out through inundation by (and interbreeding with) immigrants from Italy, Poland, etc. As Jonathan Marks notes in his fascinating book *Human Biodiversity: Genes, Race, and History* (1995):

> "We see in the eugenics movement how *any* study of human biology encodes social values, a situation that the study of clam biology or fly biology does not have to face. We see how scientists expounded on subjects they knew little about, derived results we can now see as thoroughly unjustified, and validated their own social prejudices with the 'objectivity' of science."

There is absolutely no scientific basis for racial divisions within the human species; "race" is nothing but a ***social*** construct. Any "scientific" idea that there are biologically "inferior" and "superior" races merely reflects a social consensus, backed by the force of ruling-class ideology. This logically leads to the notion that the "superior" race should be encouraged to reproduce, and the "inferior" should be eliminated. This was cast into law by Congress in the restrictive immigration bill passed in 1924, which sought to protect the "purity" of America's racial stock against the dark-skinned peoples of the world. Gould noted in *Mismeasure*, referring to the American government's refusal to allow Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust entry into the U.S.: "We know what happened to many who wished to leave but had nowhere to go. The paths to destruction are often indirect, but ideas can be agents as sure as guns and bombs." Indeed, the decline of the eugenics movement in the U.S. just prior to World War II was largely caused by the embarrassment of Nazi Germany carrying out its conclusions in gruesome practice.

Young Spartacus

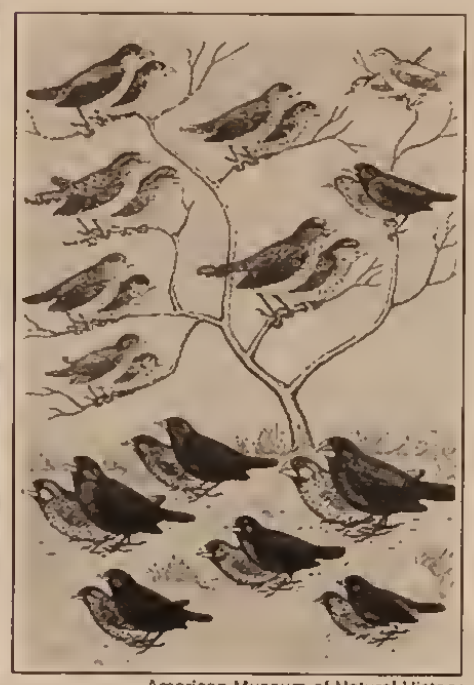
Harvard University, 1994: Student protesters denounce *The Bell Curve*, a "scholarly" rehash of racist theories of black inferiority.

But the hoary notions of biological determinism have never been far from the surface. When in the 1960s the black ghettos exploded across the North, expressing the anger and frustration born of the unmet promises of the civil rights movement, no less an authority than the *Journal of the American Medical Association* asked: "Is there something peculiar about the violent slum dweller that differentiates him from his peaceful neighbors?" In *Mismeasure*, Gould responds:

> "But why should the violent behavior of some desperate and discouraged people point to a specific disorder of their brain while the corruption and violence of some congressmen and presidents provokes no similar theory?... Shall we concentrate upon an unfounded speculation for the violence of some—one that follows the determinist philosophy of blaming the victim—or shall we try to eliminate the oppression that builds ghettos and saps the spirit of their unemployed in the first place?"

In 1996 Gould re-issued an expanded version of *Mismeasure* after Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray, longtime purveyors of pseudo-science in the service of racism, published *The Bell Curve*, a book which rehashed timeworn theories of the genetic inferiority of black people and resurrected long-discredited "data" in order to bolster the stripping away of all social services for blacks and the poor. Gould added a new chapter making the point that the popularity of *The Bell Curve* had less to do with any novelty of yet another set of racist arguments and more to do with the political climate in which the ruling class required ideological affirmation of social inequalities. We wrote in "The 'Bell Curve' and Genocide U.S.A.": (*WV* No. 611, 25 November 1994): "Thus *The Bell Curve*...was an instant phenomenon; the 'science' for a ruling class which promises to combat the problems of the ghettos with boot camps, prisons, capital punishment, and by gutting social services."

Culver



American Museum of Natural History

Charles Darwin, author of theory of evolution through natural selection. Drawing of finches arranged by Darwin to show pattern of evolution.

Human Origins: Contingent Equality vs. Separate Races

The scientists of the 19th century who claimed that race had any biological significance had little to go on except measurements of brain size, skull dimensions and the like. Gould demolished those "studies" in *Mismeasure*. But the 19th century also saw the development of paleontology—the study of the fossil record—as a science. The first Neanderthal bones were found in Europe in the mid 1800s. With Raymond Dart's discovery of a much older hominid fossil, the "Taung Baby," in 1924 in Africa, there was a great hunt for yet earlier hominid fossils tracing human evolution, especially outside of Africa. Roy Chapman Andrews' famous expedition to Mongolia in the 1920s—which discovered the first dinosaur eggs and illuminated the evolution of the Cerotopsian dinosaurs—was actually meant to find hominid fossils in Asia. The idea of an African origin for modern humans (accepted by Darwin as well) was something of an anathema for the white European/North American ruling classes. But the existing fossil record strongly supported Africa as the source. Subsequent fossil discoveries and the analysis of mitochondrial DNA from existing human populations have only reinforced that conclusion.

In 1984 Gould gave a series of lectures in Johannesburg, South Africa on the African origins of humans, and the racist bias which prevented scientists from acknowledging the overwhelming empirical evidence for years. Ironically, he spoke at the University of the Witwatersrand, historically designated as a "white only" institution by the apartheid regime. With Gould's teachings challenging the very basis of white-supremacist South Africa, it took some courage to travel there. While in Pretoria, he wrote a powerful essay, "Human Equality Is a Contingent Fact of History" (reprinted in *The Flamingo's Smile* [1985]). The essay is an ardent declaration of the basic equality of all humans and a denunciation of the history of biological categorization of humans into a hierarchy of races—a theme he returned to throughout his life. For Gould, this was not moral exhortation, but simply a statement of ***biological fact***. Human evolution could have taken a rather different course: as Gould asks, what if one or some of the other twigs on the evolutionary branch containing *Homo sapiens* had survived to the present? Referring to the hominid *Australopithecus robustus*, which died out less than a million years ago, Gould states:

> "It might well have survived and presented us today with all the ethical dilemmas of a human species truly and markedly inferior in intelligence (with its cranial capacity only one-third our own). Would we have built zoos, established reserves, promoted slavery, committed genocide, or perhaps even practiced kindness? Human equality is a contingent fact of history."

The possibility of co-existence of ancestors, or cousins, on the branch *Homo* is not so remote—the Neanderthals died out a mere 30,000 years ago. The history of life is full of examples of new species radiating off an ancestral line without the extinction of the old stock. For modern humans, it simply didn't happen that way.

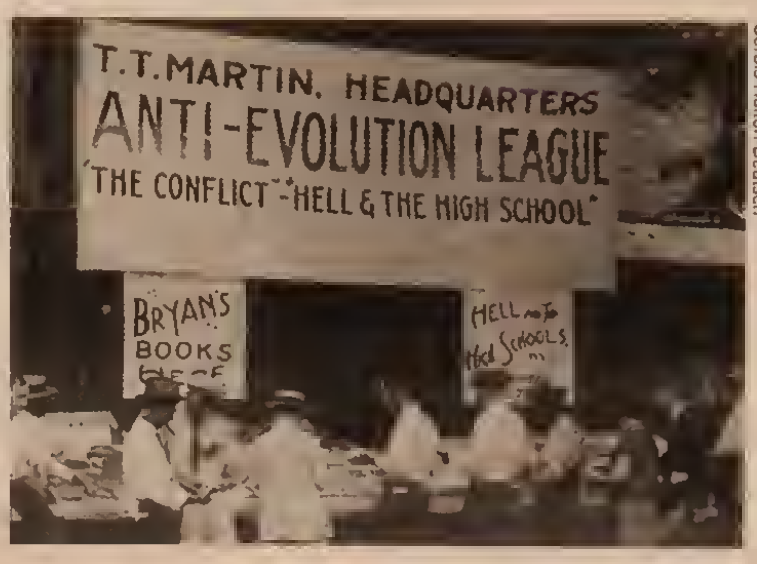
There is no scientific basis for dividing humanity into biologically distinct "races." In the essay cited above, Gould pointed to the results from electrophoretic analysis of proteins produced in human cells:

> "Thus, with electrophoresis we could finally ask the key question: How much genetic difference exists among human races?
>
> "The answer, surprising for many people, soon emerged without ambiguity: damned little. Intense studies for more than a decade have detected not a single 'race gene'—that is, a gene present in all members of one group and none of another. Frequencies vary, often considerably, among groups, but all human races are much of a muchness. We can measure so much variation among individuals ***within*** any race that we encounter very little new variation by adding another race to the sample. In other words, the great preponderance of human variation occurs within groups, not in the differences between them. My colleague Richard Lewontin...who did much of the original electrophoretic work on human variation, puts it dramatically: If, God forbid, the holocaust occurs and 'only the Xhosa people of the southern tip of Africa survived, the human species would still retain 80 percent of its genetic variation'."

This conclusion is reinforced by more modern molecular genetic analysis, which can detect more subtle variations invisible to electrophoresis. Jonathan Marks, in *Human Biodiversity*, points to the results from a genetic analysis called "restriction fragment length polymorphism" (RFLP)—the DNA-testing technique that has been used to exonerate quite a number of death row inmates who otherwise would have been executed. Marks notes:

> "These data, at the most fundamental genetic levels—the presence of one nucleotide versus another—reinforce what was established in the 1960s from cruder genetic comparisons based on proteins: genetic polymorphism in the human species is far greater than polytypism. In other words, most genetic variations are found in most populations, though in varying proportions. The study of human genetic variation, then, is principally the study of diversity within populations; to focus on genetic differences ***between*** populations is to define a very narrow and biologically trivial question."

Genetic variation is nature's way of protecting a species from the attack of a new parasite or pathogen, or to adapt to new environmental conditions. The eugenicists' goal of preserving a supposedly "pure" Nordic stock would necessarily lead to inbreeding and a collapse of essential genetic variation. If you want that, just look at the chinless wonders of the British royal family.



Corbis Hulton-Deutsch

Dayton, Tennessee during 1925 trial of John Scopes for teaching evolution in school.

Gould and Darwin: Upstart or Grandson?

Gould was grounded in Darwin and paid many tributes to his revolutionary ideas. Contrary to popular notions, Darwin did not "invent" evolution—the idea that species may change over time was acknowledged by natural scientists who also believed in divine creation. The revolutionary aspect of Darwin's idea was that the whole evolution of the natural world could be explained on a purely materialist basis—natural selection—rather than through any supernatural intervention. The motor force was survival of the fittest: all organisms produce more progeny than can possibly survive within their ecological niche—the most intense competition is ***within*** a species, whose members all compete for the same lifestyle and food sources. The competition ***between*** species is important, but on a slightly lower level. For example, lions like to eat antelopes, and antelopes, naturally, do not want to be eaten. Faster antelopes tend to survive, but they still have to compete among themselves to assure that they can mate and produce progeny inheriting their speed.

Gould and his co-thinker Niles Eldredge developed their most famous and sometimes controversial contribution to evolutionary theory: "punctuated equilibrium." Eldredge wrote in *The Pattern of Evolution* (1999) an interesting account of how the problems of gaps in the fossil record had been addressed by others, but that no one had figured out the motor force for the apparent "abrupt" changes in evolutionary development. Gould and Eldredge argued for periods of stasis punctuated by rapid leaps (within the scope of geologic time), as Gould put it in *Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes* (1994) "a jerky, or episodic, rather than a smoothly gradual, pace of change"—a dialectical view which fits the current geological and paleontological evidence.

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Hands Off Professor Dini!

The Justice Department of religious nut John Ashcroft has targeted Michael L. Dini, associate professor of biology at Texas Tech University, in an inquiry for "religious discrimination." Why? Because Dini requires biomedical students wanting a letter of recommendation from him for post-graduate studies to "truthfully and forthrightly affirm a scientific answer" to the question of how the human species originated. In a compelling defense of evolutionary science against religious "creationism," Dini wrote on his Web site:

> "Whereas medicine is historically rooted first in the practice of magic and later in religion, modern medicine is an endeavor that springs from the sciences, biology first among these. The central, unifying principle of biology is the theory of evolution, which includes both micro- and macro-evolution, and which extends to ALL species. How can someone who does not accept the most important theory in biology expect to properly practice in a field that is so heavily based on biology?"

It is for this rational and reasonable statement that the sinister Liberty Legal Institute, a grouping of reactionary Christian lawyers whose other aims include eliminating abortion rights, filed the complaint against Dini that prompted Ashcroft's investigation. With an administration that is driving ahead with the state-sponsored intrusion of religion into all aspects of life, all manner of bible-thumping reactionaries feel the wind in their sails. Evidently, these religious bigots desire a return to the days when medical problems were dealt with through bloodletting and prayer.

Increasing attempts by government authorities to force the teaching of creationism represent a challenge to one of the most basic gains of the 1776 American Revolution—separation of church and state. The fact that professors like Dini are hounded by the state demonstrates how the American bourgeoisie today rejects Enlightenment rationalism in favor of religious mysticism and anti-scientific prejudice. For the bourgeoisie, it is easier to rule over an ignorant population mired in the regimentation and servility of religious backwardness. ***Defend the separation of church and state! Keep religion out of the schools! Hands off Professor Dini!***

Defend Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

multiracial working people of America and the semicolonial masses of Iraq have a common enemy in this war-crazed, labor-hating gang in the White House and the capitalist class it represents. As Bush & Co. push through massive tax cuts for Wall Street, they are taking the ax even to school lunch programs for poor kids. While the official unemployment rate has gone up by 50 percent in the last two years, House majority leader Tom DeLay denounced the unions as "a clear and present danger to the security of the United States." Having rounded up hundreds of non-citizens and hauled in thousands more for interrogation, the government now wants to assert the right to strip anyone of their citizenship if they are found to be supporting an organization the government deems terrorist.

But the reformist and liberal organizers of the antiwar protests in the U.S.—from Workers World Party's International ANSWER coalition to the more mainstream liberal United for Peace—aim not to mobilize workers and minorities in opposition to American imperialism but to appeal to a wing of the imperialist ruling class, namely "antiwar" Democrats. To the extent the Democratic Party liberals have opposed an invasion of Iraq, it has been to argue that North Korea's nuclear weapons program makes it a more immediate threat. It is in the interest of the international proletariat to stand for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state, including its right to nuclear arms, against the imperialists.

To build an antiwar movement with bourgeois politicians is to build an antiwar movement with the very forces in whose interest imperialist war is waged. This is crucial for today's activists to understand. We print below, in edited form, a presentation by Spartacist League comrade Helene Brosius on the Vietnam antiwar movement, when the same class-collaborationist strategy that is advocated today in the name of the "broadest unity" served to deflect enormous opportunities for genuine class-struggle opposition against the war. *Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq!*

WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated contingent at January 18 antiwar demonstration in San Francisco.

Lessons of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement
A Revolutionary Program for Fighting Imperialist War

I want to start with a quote that evokes what the end of the Vietnam War was like. It's from a book called *Our Great Spring Victory*, the memoirs of Vietnamese People's Army chief of staff General Van Tien Dung. He was the commander at the time of the final offensive that liberated Saigon on 30 April 1975:

> "The American evacuation was carried out from the tops of thirteen tall buildings chosen as landing pads for their helicopters. The number of these landing pads shrank gradually as tongues of fire from our advancing troops came closer. At the American embassy, the boarding point for the evacuation copters was a scene of monumental confusion, with the Americans' flunkies fighting their way in, smashing doors, climbing walls, climbing each other's backs, tussling, brawling, and trampling each other as they sought to flee....
>
> "They mobilized as many as six million American soldiers in rotation, dropped over 10 million tons of bombs, and spent over $300 billion, but in the end the U.S. ambassador had to crawl up to the helicopter pad looking for a way to flee."

Despite the myth perpetrated by the American left, the antiwar movement did not end the war in Vietnam. The U.S. was defeated on the battlefield. This victory was a tremendous watershed. It was a wonderful boon for the working class and oppressed worldwide: for at least ten years, the bloody hand of U.S. imperialism was stayed by what's called the "Vietnam syndrome." That is, that the American public had had enough with seeing the body bags come back.

The Spartacist League fought for victory to the fighting forces of Vietnam, the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front (NLF) in the South. And after 1975, we were able to say, "Vietnam was a victory! 2, 3, many more defeats for U.S. imperialism!"

The collapse of the Soviet Union, a degenerated workers state, in 1991-92 and the ascendancy of capitalist counterrevolution there, as well as the similar counterrevolutionary transformations in East Europe, were a huge setback for the world's working class, and one of the signal differences between today's period and the period of the Vietnam War that I'm going to talk about.

Seeing the hundreds of thousands of people milling around in the frigid air in Washington last Saturday was indeed reminiscent of the late 1960s and early '70s antiwar movement. Even the very words on the banners and signs were familiar: the liberal "all war is bad"-type pacifism. Another thing that was very familiar was the parade of Democrats—whether movie star Democrats, preacher Democrats, black misleader Democrats, or labor-misleader Democrats—on the platform. And the other familiar thing was the ostensible leftists, standing up there as supposed "honest center" antiwar folks, making sure everything was "peaceful and legal" and safe for their bourgeois friends on the platform.

We can really use some of the experiences from the Vietnam War period now to politically arm us as it's quite clear that Bush is barreling his way to war in Iraq. But this has to be done in a thoughtful way. The period is really quite different now. First of all, you have to start out from a Marxist position on war. We understand that war is endemic to capitalism. What's central is that you need to sweep away the whole capitalist system to get rid of imperialist war.

Imperialism has been the dominant system throughout the 20th century up through today. And American imperialism, whether under Democrats or Republicans, has acted like a world bully boy for the last 100 years. Especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union, which had been a counterweight to U.S. imperialism, America's rulers have felt free to stomp around the globe, brandishing their weapons of mass destruction.

Imperialists wage war on other countries basically in order to expand and conquer new markets. They have to find sources of cheap labor and cheap raw materials. And this leads, of course, to fierce competition among the different powers; very often to direct military confrontation. World War I and World War II are examples of that. Of course, a hefty military arsenal is a necessary part of this. After all, you have to enforce the worldwide capitalist drive for profits. Revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky wrote very trenchantly on the question of war, especially in the lead-up to World War II. In his 1938 article "Lenin and Imperialist War," he explained: "A peace concluded by imperialists would only be a breathing spell before a new war. Only a revolutionary mass struggle against war and against imperialism which breeds war can secure a real peace."

That captures our view, that as long as the capitalist system exists, there will be war. And as long as there has been imperialist war, there have been pacifists and liberals running around screaming at the imperialists to "please stop." In a June 1932 letter, Trotsky wrote to his followers around the world, urging them not to let the workers' misleaders—and their pseudo-socialist tails who sound very much like Workers World and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) today—hold sway over the antiwar activists unopposed. The revolutionaries should intervene in these struggles "to pose the question of struggle against the war danger in a Marxist, Leninist manner." He went on: "If war is a continuation of politics, the struggle against war is a continuation of revolutionary politics." And this is the heart of our strategy today, as it was in the '60s and '70s Vietnam antiwar movement.

UPI

U.S. mass murderers scramble as Vietnamese Communists liberate Saigon, April 1975.

Take a Side—Defend Iraq!

Our revolutionary strategy sets us off from the rest of the so-called left. Take the current conflict, the impending war on Iraq. We blast our message: "Defend Iraq against U.S. attack!" Iraq is different from Vietnam, where the Vietnamese Stalinists were leading a social revolution, which meant that the population was fighting for something deeper than independence—a revolution to overthrow the system of capitalism. But we do take a position on the side of semicolonial Iraq—which is already the target of almost daily bombings by the British and the U.S.—against the predatory U.S. imperialists.

I heard that some of the people we met in the January 18 antiwar protest in Washington weren't clear about the difference between the slogans "Defend Iraq!" and "No to war!" I assure you, the bourgeoisie is very clear on this. "Defend Iraq" means that you don't just oppose the war, but that you have a side in it, against the Americans. And if you were a communist in Iraq, it would mean organizing for workers revolution there against the Hussein regime. We give not one iota of political support to Saddam Hussein, who, when he was a client of the U.S. before 1991, was—and still is—a butcher of Iraqi Kurds, workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims, students, et al.

Were the U.S. to somehow suffer defeat in this adventure, the planet would ring with the cheers of those who have been on the boot end of American imperialism—in Latin America, Africa, the Near East. Such an outcome would weaken the hand of American imperialism, while boosting the fortunes of others, such as the Palestinians in their struggle against Israeli occupation.

We call for class struggle at home against the U.S. imperialist rulers. This is the primary way to implement our revolutionary defensism of Iraq. The U.S. ruling class is the common enemy of the American and Iraqi working class and oppressed. Those warmakers are the same labor-hating gang that imposed the strike-breaking Taft-Hartley law against the longshore workers out in California last fall. They send the cops into the ghettos to kill black kids, lock up thousands of immigrants in the name of the "war on terror" and threaten the lives of all women by taking away our abortion rights. That's who the fake-left groups call on to stop the war.

We say "Down with the UN starvation blockade!" We understand that the UN is just a fig leaf for imperialist slaughter, a kind of talk shop for leaders of other countries to get up and make objections to what the U.S. is doing, and then acquiesce anyway. Our aim is to win workers, students and others provoked by the U.S.'s naked aggression to a revolutionary program of not only opposition to war but opposition to capitalist imperialism, which breeds war. And during the Vietnam War, our task was the same.

Vietnam and the War at Home

The ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), from which our tendency was expelled in 1963, was the main force behind the antiwar coalitions in the mid '60s and early '70s. The SWP was the master of class-collaborationist coalitions, as the Stalinist Communist Party had been in the 1930s. Those reformist groups which today speak of building the broadest movement, the most diverse movement, the most non-exclusionist movement, learned at the feet of the SWP.

As early as 1965, the SWP tried to impose a single-issue, reformist program on the lash-up that was called the New York City Fifth Avenue Peace Parade

Committee. They tried to limit the slogan to "Stop the war now!" There was no way we were going to abandon our program for this kind of lowest-common-denominator politics, which was aiming to make the whole thing palatable to the preachers, the labor bureaucrats and any representative of the bourgeoisie that they hoped would soon stop by.

We were very much a minority at the time with our position of victory to the NLF, and we made a bloc in the 1965 march with a tiny group called the Committee to Aid the NLF, which proudly carried the NLF flag around, driving the SWP absolutely crazy. We carried signs saying "Victory to the NLF!" and "Unconditional, Immediate Withdrawal!" These were really very different slogans from the rest of the march.

The same year, at Cornell University we had a little group called the Young Socialist League (YSL). And we thought a really good way to concretize our slogan "Victory to the NLF!" would be to set up a table to collect money, with a big sign: "Guns for the NLF!" Within three hours, we had polarized the entire campus. It was wild—even other leftists didn't know what to make of it. The administration tried to ban us from the Student Union. We collected $7.75 that day, which we immediately sent off in an international money order to the NLF. Just in case we all ended up in jail, we wanted to get that money out.

The furor lasted several weeks, and it was all over the press in godforsaken frozen upstate New York, and even New York City. The *New York Times* quoted a key sentence from a Student Union statement, that it's okay to gag the YSL because "funds raised may well be used to the detriment of Americans in Vietnam." Well, that, of course, was the point! The university threatened us with the Trading

Wide World

UPI

Vietnam War took place amid growing social turmoil in U.S. Black Marines in Vietnam with sign reading "Black Power Is Number One." Right: Troops called in to suppress 1967 Detroit ghetto revolt.

with the Enemy Act, the Foreign Agents Registration Act (which carried a sentence of five years and $10,000), etc. But nothing ever came of it.

Of course, three years later *thousands* of youth were running through the streets of San Francisco, New York and Washington, screaming "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh —The NLF is gonna win!" Consciousness changes very rapidly through social struggle.

There's another important factor that sets off the '60s from now. By the time that the military buildup in Vietnam really began, in 1965, the U.S. had gone through a decade of wrenching social struggle known as the Southern civil rights movement. This was a struggle to gain simple, legal equality with whites—the right to vote, the use of public facilities, basic stuff. Thousands of blacks were drawn into the movement in the South and they risked their lives. Hundreds suffered under the whips and dogs of Southern sheriffs. Some died at the hands of the KKK. Many endured beatings by enraged racists (some of whom later turned out to be working for the FBI).

The struggle also animated a layer of anti-racist whites in the South and North, including myself. I went to the South in 1964. It was really the beginning of my political education when I realized that the racism and the horrendous conditions of rural poverty that I saw in that corner of Tennessee would not be changed one bit by getting the vote. The whole system was rotten and had to be changed.

The Southern civil rights movement was a limited success. It ended legalized, Jim Crow segregation; it certainly did not end segregation in the South. But in the mid 1960s, the movement moved to the North. In the North, it was not a matter of legal segregation; it was a matter of segregated housing, lousy schools, job discrimination. In the North, the civil rights movement hit a brick wall. It was faced with challenging the racist capitalist system itself, and, of course, challenging the state that defends this system.

The move to the North led many black and white activists to rapidly outstrip Martin Luther King's "turn the other cheek" pacifism, which was so highly touted at last weekend's march in Washington by the ISO and others. And many even rejected for a time Martin Luther King's and other black leaders' allegiance to the Democratic Party. Out of this split, the militant black nationalist—though ultimately reformist—Black Panther Party was formed.

Spartacist

New York City, 1965: After reformist protest organizers tried to ban our call for "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution," Spartacist contingent defiantly marched with Committee to Aid the NLF.

1964 was the beginning of the ghetto uprisings. The first was in Harlem. There was a demonstration against the police killing of a 15-year-old kid. The cops came in and attacked the demonstration, and the ghetto exploded. We were very involved and tried to organize garment workers to come up to Harlem and defend the ghetto. We helped organize a big demonstration in the Garment District. After Harlem, the ghettos in almost every major city—I think some 200 in all —exploded, including the Watts ghetto in Los Angeles. The streets of American cities were filled with tanks and troops.

So, going into the Vietnam period, this country was a social tinderbox. You had masses of frustrated, enraged black people, deeply distrustful of the government. Our slogan "Vietnam, Watts—It's the same struggle!" was aimed at drawing a crucial link between the mass of enraged black youth and the left-moving antiwar protesters.

Black Troops Hated the Vietnam War

In the beginning, the Democrats and labor bureaucrats mostly didn't want to touch the antiwar movement with a ten-foot pole. The Democrats happily supported the war and their president, Lyndon B. Johnson, who was perpetrating it. And the AFL-CIO labor leaders were slavishly pro-Democratic Party and militantly hawkish on the war. Today, it's a slightly different situation, with a Republican administration and certain illusions in the Democratic Party.

There was a very rapid buildup of American forces in Vietnam. It reached 400,000 troops—though only a small percentage of those were combat troops—by the end of 1966. Bombs came down on North Vietnam on a daily basis for many years. More bomb tonnage was dropped on Vietnam than was dropped by all the combatants combined in World War II. In 1968, the NLF launched the courageous Tet Offensive. This was a coordinated military offensive of some 80-100,000 liberation fighters throughout South Vietnam. Tet showed unequivocally that this highly motivated force was determined to fight to the end. It really shook the American rulers, and it exposed the lie that victory was "just around the corner." U.S. casualties skyrocketed.

After Tet, 200,000 more men were drafted. The draft was a big deal. It got a lot of young men scared and very motivated. Many black draftees were acutely aware of the civil rights movement, the ghetto explosions, and were not too happy about going to fight for this government. This consciousness very much contributed to the state of mind of the combat troops. By this time, the U.S. fighting force was in a state of advanced decay. And I mean *advanced* decay. These troops were severely demoralized.

Garry Gianninoto, a comrade of ours, was a Navy medic in Vietnam just after Tet. He described the sort of barbarism that bred a combat force on the verge of mutiny in an article in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 513, 2 November 1990). This is what he said about "search and destroy" missions:

> "You'd just burn a village down, destroy the grain stores and seal off all the bunkers, whether or not there were people inside. Nobody would bother going in to look, they would just take grenades and throw them in there or use a flamethrower."

Garry died in 1991 of cancer, probably brought on by exposure to Agent Orange and other chemicals used by the Americans in Vietnam.

The soldiers sent to Vietnam were kids, many were high-school dropouts. Over 30 percent of the combat troops were black. They had no idea where they were, and they were surrounded by a hostile population that was fighting for a social revolution. With casualties rising, many soldiers saw absolutely no reason for being in Vietnam, and being told to shoot young girls and old men, burn down villages, etc. This led to even greater demoralization among the troops. There were perhaps 1,500—maybe more —American officers injured or killed by their own troops, often with fragmentation grenades, which is where the term "fragging" comes from.

The black soldiers really knew, better than anyone else, that Vietnam was a dirty imperialist war. They got shafted in 'Nam; they got shafted when they came back to the ghetto upheavals, unemployment, discrimination and poverty. World heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali was hailed by blacks as a hero when he refused to be drafted and said, "No Viet Cong ever called me" the n-word. Last weekend, a comrade spotted a woman carrying a sign: "Saddam Hussein never called me n----r."

By 1970, it was clear that the U.S. was losing, and a section of the bourgeoisie was becoming convinced that the war was damaging the interests of American imperialism and that the U.S. should pull out. While the protests were swelling, the social-patriotism of the protests remained dominant, just as it is today. The majority of protesters were liberals, far more concerned about the thousands of body bags coming back to this country than they were about the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese. Not that they didn't care about the slaughter of the Vietnamese, but that was not their main concern.

During this period, the SWP's class-collaborationist vehicle was an organization called NPAC (National Peace Action Coalition), under the single slogan "Out Now!" NPAC was completely congruous with this kind of bourgeois pacifism. Meanwhile, a section of the movement was rapidly moving to the left and looking for a lot more answers about much broader questions. And we began to make a name for ourselves with our revolutionary program from 1968 to 1971-72.

I want to talk a little about the ISO, which has always had trouble deciding which side of the class line it's on. They view the degenerated and deformed workers states run by the Stalinists as some kind of variant of an exploitative regime and refuse to defend them. They claimed that the Soviet Union and East Europe were "state capitalist," as bad as, or even worse than, Western capitalism—a view they today hold about Cuba, China, North Korea and Vietnam, the remaining deformed workers states.

During the Vietnam War, the ISO's predecessor, the International Socialists (I.S.), at first actually refused to call for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the troops. Later they did call for withdrawal of troops, and finally, for a brief period of time, when it became popular among a growing section of the antiwar protesters, they actually adopted the slogan "Victory to the NLF!"

This position was completely at odds with their "third camp" politics of "neither Moscow nor Washington." Their argument was, "Well, this is a national liberation struggle." A bogus argument. In this period, the North Vietnamese deformed workers state was very heavily involved in the war in Vietnam, and the Vietnamese

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Defend Iraq...

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were not just a bunch of "liberation fighters." And not only that; behind them stood the Soviet Union, which the I.S./ISO considered to be "imperialist." But "principles" for the ISO have never been a big issue. They just follow what's popular.

Today, the "Russian question"—defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states—is very sharply posed in North Korea. We call for unconditional military defense of North Korea against imperialism, and we defend their right to develop nuclear weapons to defend themselves against the American nuclear madmen. During the Vietnam War, our slogan was "Soviet nuclear shield must cover Hanoi, Peking!" In part, that slogan was a polemic against the Soviet Stalinists, who sought to conciliate the imperialists.

In 1970, Nixon moved troops into Cambodia, a neighboring country, and we raised the slogan, "All Indochina must go Communist!" This was also a double-edged sword, challenging the Stalinists to take power. In 1975, when it looked like Saigon was finally going to be liberated, we had a banner headline, "Take Saigon!" in part because we were figuring that any minute the Stalinists might try to sell out the struggle.

Labor Struggle and the Antiwar Movement

The New Left was dismissive of the working class in general. A couple of weeks ago, there was a dramatic action by Scottish train drivers who refused to drive a load of war materials to the biggest NATO munitions depot in Europe. That's a very powerful gesture. Students cannot refuse to load arms; students do not have that kind of power because they are outside of the productive process. They are a very volatile layer of society. They can be recruited to the fascist movement or drawn to the communist movement. Our job is to intervene and try to win them to communism.

But the New Left in general, which was mostly petty-bourgeois, believed that students would make the revolution. In 1970 there was a large student strike—4.5 million students went out, half the student population in the entire country. Nixon kept sending troops into Cambodia.

Coalition builders often talk about the need to draw labor into the movement, by which they mean to get more union tops onto the platforms. Mainstream labor leaders work for two masters. On the one hand, there's that inconvenient thing that they have to be elected by the membership sometimes, and therefore have to maintain a certain measure of credibility with the workers. On the other hand, since they fundamentally uphold the system of capitalism—the system run by the very people they're supposed to be fighting, the capitalist exploiters—they also, and primarily, are beholden to the capitalists. We call them "labor lieutenants of capital," agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers movement, and in the antiwar movement they played that role.

Some labor leaders came into the antiwar movement around 1971. At that time they were particularly busy selling out the working class. Republican president Nixon was facing a deepening economic crisis and had just imposed wage controls. Not one of the labor leaders opposed these wage controls, from the reactionary AFL-CIO bureaucracy of George Meany to the "progressives" and "militants" of the auto workers union. They maintained their utter subservience to the Democratic Party, which had the line that Nixon should have imposed the wage controls *sooner* than he did.

We wrote at the time, "The 'left' bureaucrats are able to appear militant on the war, which is, of course, intimately tied up with inflation and unemployment, while selling out the real struggle around these very issues. They can mouth slogans about the war and the role it plays without committing themselves to a serious struggle on any class question—including the war itself" ("Bring Working-Class Power Against the War," *Workers Action* No. 9, July-August 1971). The SWP's platform was a very convenient place for these labor bureaucrats.

The working class is not just another sector that you need to draw in to swell the numbers at pacifist antiwar demonstrations. It has social power. We saw that power in December when the New York City transit workers were threatening to walk out and the whole city government went nuts. Imagine the impact of workers with that kind of social power being mobilized in strike action in political opposition to war. Imagine the impact of a real proletarian opposition to imperialism based on an anti-capitalist perspective.

Basil Blackwell Inc.

Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky rallies Red Army troops during 1920 war against imperialist-backed counterrevolutionary regime in Poland.

There were a whole bunch of economic strikes in the early '70s by workers fighting to defend their livelihoods—there was a big GM strike, a postal workers walkout in defiance of the government. We agitated during that period for an antiwar Friday—a one-day work stoppage against the war—and for labor political strikes against the war. Given the social turmoil in the country, this was a palpable possibility.

Labor struggle against the war would have linked the militancy of black workers—for example in Detroit auto, where there were subjectively revolutionary black workers—to the largely petty-bourgeois and increasingly radicalized New Left student antiwar movement. This would have been explosive. Only a multiracial revolutionary vanguard party rooted in the working class could have made that link successfully. We were then not big enough and had no roots in the proletariat.

The U.S. labor bureaucrats played a leading role in preventing such labor struggle. In 1970, there was a wildcat strike of 20,000 Teamsters in Ohio that was opposed by the Democrats, the Republicans, the Teamsters national leaders and the union's local leaders. And most of these people called for the National Guard to come in to stop the strike, including Teamsters vice president Harold Gibbons, who was an endorser of NPAC. He and all the rest got their wish. The National Guard came in and tried to smash the strike. Four hundred of those National Guardsmen were then sent off to Kent State, where they killed four students at an antiwar demonstration. How do you think that particular strikebreaking Teamsters official would have reacted to us reds raising labor strikes against the war at one of his precious NPAC conferences when he's calling to send troops against his own union membership? Well actually, we found out how they would react. And the SWP was there promising to make sure the bureaucrats were not offended by reds calling for labor action against the war.

The same year, the SWP sealed its promise in blood, namely ours and that of Progressive Labor (PL), when they viciously attacked us at an NPAC gathering. We had shouted down Democratic Senator Vance Hartke when he tried to speak at this conference. And then they put up Victor Reuther, brother of auto union leader Walter Reuther. Victor was the CIA wing of the family. He had been the CIA's man in the European labor movement after World War II. This is the guy the SWP had up there as their "labor leader." When he rose to speak, we were actually pretty polite. We got up and we chanted, "Labor strikes against the war!" ten times and we sat down. Made a point. PL carried on a little bit longer. The SWP went nuts. They viciously attacked us. It was very, very bloody.

We agitated for "Bourgeoisie out of NPAC!" But in no way was this meant to be "for NPAC without the bourgeoisie." It was a central agitational slogan for us, but it was part of a series of interrelated demands, and together these demands constituted a revolutionary, class-struggle policy against the Vietnam War. Also, we didn't emphasize kicking out the liberal politicians and their ilk because their presence somehow magically transformed NPAC into a class-collaborationist outfit. Sometimes bourgeois politicians will choose to mount the platform of communist-organized events. That's *their* contradiction. NPAC, though, was a political vessel that was *created* for the bourgeoisie, just as the organizers of today's antiwar movement are hoping for the bourgeoisie to enter it. If the drive to exclude the bourgeoisie had succeeded in any one of these conferences, it would have exploded the whole organization; NPAC would have ceased to exist.

Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War!

Some of the more sophisticated types among our opponents today on the left bandy about the term "united front" as their version of unity-mongering. So, what's a united front? The guiding principle of working-class unity in action against a common enemy is "March separately, strike together." So you march with your own banners, and you strike together against war or whatever other issue you're fighting against. United fronts are temporary actions.

But the reformists and centrists just love their ongoing coalitions because they allow them to submerge their "socialist" politics under the cover of "unity." They say to us: "We want unity and that's why we have to water down our program and exclude you, the communists." That's what they mean by "unity."

To communists, the purpose of the united front is to allow the sharpest political struggle while marching shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy. Our watchword is freedom of criticism, unity in action. We welcome opportunities for united fronts, because they provide a terrain for us to test our revolutionary politics side by side with the reformists and the centrists. For the same reason, the reformists and centrists avoid a real united front like the plague. The reality behind all the fake left's unity-mongering is to hide an appetite for unity with the bourgeoisie.

In 1937, James Burnham, then a member of the Trotskyist movement, wrote a pamphlet called *The People's Front: The New Betrayal* (reprinted in "On the United Front," *Young Communist Bulletin* No. 3) about the Stalinist version of class-collaborationist coalition building. Burnham explained:

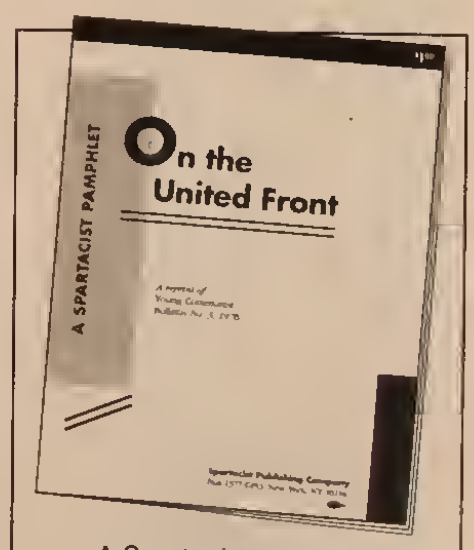
> "Most significant of all is the application of the People's Front policy to 'anti-war work.' Through a multitude of pacifist organizations...the Stalinists aim at the creation of a 'broad, classless People's Front of all those opposed to war.'... They rule out in advance the Marxist analysis of war as necessarily resulting from the inner conflicts of capitalism and therefore genuinely opposed only by revolutionary class struggle against the capitalist order: and, in contrast, maintain that all persons, from whatever social class or group, whether or not opposed to capitalism, can 'unite' to stop war."

It was through this kind of class-collaborationist program that reformists and centrists channeled the widespread social discontent expressed in the radicalization of the New Left into avenues which were not only socially impotent but served to reinforce illusions in capitalism and its props, such as the labor fakers and the bourgeois politicians.

So how will the revolutionary party be built? How does consciousness change? Well, the consciousness of the working class will change fundamentally through the intervention of the revolutionary party in struggle. I want to end with a wonderful quote from Polish Marxist Isaac Deutscher. Many of the essays in his *Marxism in Our Time* were written during the Vietnam War. Here, he's writing about Lenin's understanding of the role of the revolutionary party and working-class consciousness. He's talking about Russia before the 1917 Revolution, saying that the working class

> "needed the party's guidance in order to raise its revolutionary 'mission.' Consequently, the party could not merely identify itself with the workers and content itself with absorbing and expressing their moods. It had to shape their moods. It had to identify itself primarily with the advanced workers in order to be able, with them and through them, to educate politically the backward ones. The party must therefore be a 'proletarian vanguard,' a Marxist elite, lucid, self-disciplined, indomitable, and capable of providing the 'general staff' of the revolution."

That party has to instill consciousness of the common enemy among all the disparate elements in the population, weld together all the different needs and longings of the workers and oppressed internationally, and turn them into a weapon to defeat the capitalist beast.■



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IG...

(continued from page 3)

use jingoistic anti-immigrant racism to divide the workers along ethnic and national lines. We say: ***Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Labor must organize immigrant workers!***" (emphasis in original).

The IG points to our 4 October 2002 article headlined "Defeat PMA/Government Union-Busting! Victory to the ILWU!" as the smoking gun of our "capitulations." Why? Because we didn't call for defying Taft-Hartley before it had been invoked by the government! Instead, the article addressed the concrete reality then confronting longshoremen who had been locked out indefinitely by the PMA, arguing that "***the entire labor movement must mobilize in solidarity with the longshore workers to ensure that nothing moves in or out of West Coast docks***" (emphasis in original). When the Bush administration did impose Taft-Hartley, our article headlined "Labor: Defend the ILWU!" (*WV* No. 789, 18 October 2002) demanded: "The entire labor movement must come to the defense of the ILWU now and protest every attack on the union. ***Down with the slave-labor Taft-Hartley Act—Government hands off the ILWU!***" (emphasis in original).

IG Caught with Pants Down

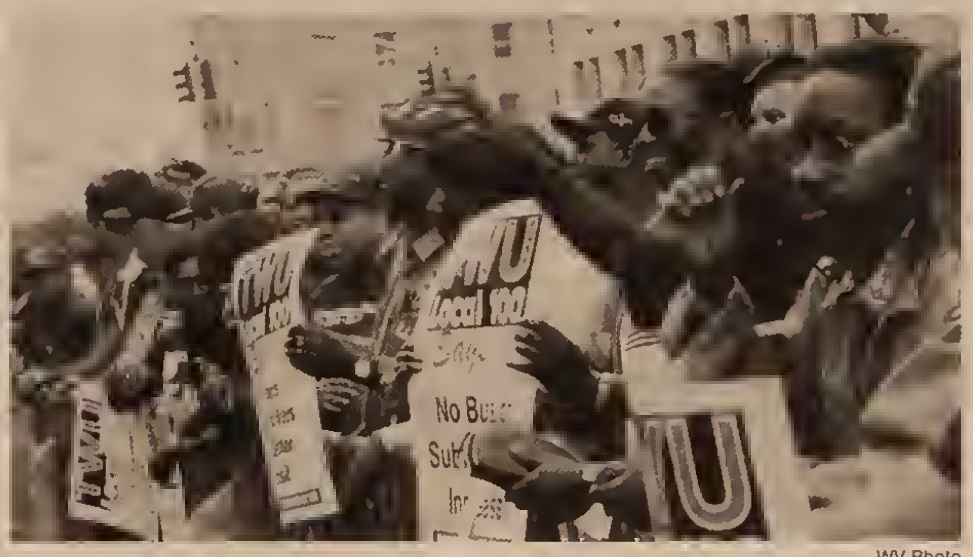
Dropping its own lies that our propaganda addressed to the ILWU had "ducked every single issue in which the dock workers' struggle intersected the war," the IG's latest article argues, "When the showdown actually came, the SL dropped this subject like a hot potato." To argue that we raised the question of military cargo before the lockout is hardly a very effective demonstration of our lack of revolutionary fiber. And what about during the lockout?

This was a defensive battle which was brought to the workers by the shipping bosses and behind them a particularly vicious administration in the White House. Throughout the lockout, the bureaucracy flaunted its commitment to moving military goods. For the union to have been mobilized for such a political offensive as hot-cargoing military goods, in the face of a government revving up for war and bent on dismembering anything that got in its way, would have required a tremendous leap in consciousness and, above all, a leadership armed with a program of class struggle. The IG's oh-so-militant sloganeering has nothing to do with the fight to mobilize workers for a political confrontation with the forces of the capitalist enemy. Instead, the IG denigrates the fight to advance the consciousness of the proletariat and, by so doing, sows illusions in the capacity of the present labor misleaders to lead a fight against the bosses and their state.

The IG fulminates that in 1971, when Republican president Richard Nixon brought down Taft-Hartley to end a longshore walkout, we called to defy Taft-Hartley and for labor strikes against the Vietnam War. They go on to sneer, "That was then, this is now, we can already hear the SL say." OK, we'll say it: That was then, this is now. What agitational slogans are raised are not divorced from political context and social reality. In 1971, there *was* a longshore strike; the previous year postal workers had defied the law and staged the first strike ever against the federal government; the postal workers strike was followed by a Teamsters wildcat.

Big protests against the Vietnam War, largely by student youth, began in 1964. But we didn't put forward the call for labor action against the war until 1967, when we raised the demand for an "antiwar Friday"—a one-day political protest strike. Unlike in Europe, where one-day political strikes are common (and most often are used by the labor bureaucracy to simply let the ranks blow off steam and to corral the workers into support for the mass reformist labor parties), in this country where the working class has little even elemental class consciousness, the call for political strikes is only a few steps short of calling for a proletarian insurrection. To have raised such a demand in the early days of the Vietnam War, when the working class overwhelmingly supported the war, would have been nothing other than phrasemongering, discrediting us among the more advanced workers who understand how serious such an action would be.

By 1967, opposition to the war was spilling over into the labor movement, and by the early 1970s there were enormous opportunities to actually mobilize class-struggle opposition to the war. It was after a number of militant economic strikes rocked the country in the early 1970s—intersecting increasing opposition to the war among workers—that we raised the call, "Labor strikes against the war!" Our calls for an antiwar Friday and for labor strikes against the war thus intersected a real and growing sentiment *for* such labor action. In other words, we were dead serious about genuinely fighting to lead a proletarian revolutionary opposition.



WV Photo

NYC transit workers rally at MTA headquarters in Brooklyn last September.

Like the IG, outfits in Europe such as the right-centrists of Workers Power can come up with all sorts of bombast calling on workers in munitions factories to "sabotage imperialist war production" and so on. While mindlessly agitating for the workers to fight to the last drop of their blood, on the ground Workers Power's real program is calling to "lobby Parliament," pleading with Labour Party prime minister Tony Blair not to join "Bush's war."

The IG's "Militant" Fraud

Considerations such as the question of leadership, the balance of forces and the political consciousness of the proletariat—vital to any class battle—were evidently of little consequence to the "militant" blowhards of the IG. But such considerations were of consequence to longshoremen who were up against forces bent on the union's destruction while saddled with a leadership allied with the class enemy. And they were to us because our purpose *is* to arm the proletariat with the consciousness and leadership necessary for combat with the forces of the capitalist class.

Even in the face of such a monumental historic defeat as the total obliteration of the former East German deformed workers state, the DDR, the program of the IG's *líder máximo* Jan Norden, who was then editor of *WV*, was to agitate for a program of mass strikes by the devastated East German proletariat. As we noted following the departure of Norden and his two followers from our organization, "This posture of imminent 'mass resistance' negated the critical factor of ***consciousness*** which only a Leninist vanguard could introduce" ("A Shamefaced Defection from Trotskyism," *WV* No. 648, 5 July 1996). But for Norden the leadership for his program of economic "fightback" was to come from none other than the geriatric remnants of the former Stalinist bureaucracy who had just finished selling out the DDR to the imperialists!

Today the IG chicken-baits us for not ***agitating*** that the ILWU engage in a similar program of fightback in a confrontation with a conglomeration of shipping magnates and the U.S. imperialist state. No we didn't, for the elementary reason that what one advocates as a course of struggle cannot be separated from the instrumentality to carry it out. In other words, it requires taking on the class-collaborationist politics of the trade-union bureaucracy and making clear that in the course of their struggles the workers need to forge a new leadership.

The ILWU International leadership openly embraced the government's "war against terror" and eagerly collaborated with the government in writing the new Maritime Transportation Security Act. What of the "progressive" ILWU tops, such as those in the leadership of Local 10 in the Bay Area? They were the ones we indicted for spilling cynical empty words at antiwar rallies while bragging that they had convinced the PMA to let longshoremen load military cargo during the lockout. And while the union was locked in a showdown with the capitalists of the PMA, all wings of the bureaucracy were out hustling votes for the capitalists of the Democratic Party. So just who was the IG looking to to lead the longshoremen in a confrontation against the union-busting laws and the military of the capitalist state?

Their claim that we did not "utter a word of criticism of union leader Jim Spinosa" is more than suspect as a cover for their own buddy in the Local 10 bureaucracy, business agent Jack Heyman. Heyman is a type familiar in the labor movement in this country since the 1930s—the onetime leftist who, having given up on the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat, makes a career as the house oppositionist in the trade-union bureaucracy. Heyman talked the talk about strike action, opposing Taft-Hartley and the bureaucracy's sellout deals with the bosses. But he never waged the political fights necessary to implement these demands as against the pro-capitalist policies of the ILWU bureaucracy. Like the IG, he called on the ranks to "vote no" on the contract deal. And then what was the membership to do? "Longshore workers should reject this contract and send our negotiating committee back," Heyman declared (*Socialist Worker*, 10 January).

Such trade-union opportunism is the real face behind the IG's verbal radicalism. No wonder they made such a big deal out of the Bay Area Taft-Hartley conference, which was nothing other than a vehicle for phonies like Heyman to try to advance their careers. The IG postures as bold class warriors urging the ranks of the ILWU to strike now, defy Taft-Hartley, hot-cargo military goods, rip up the sellout contract. Why not? It's no skin off their nose. And when it is, it is a far different picture.

Take on the capitalist state? Not when it's their neck on the line, or even if it gets in the way of their own petty advantage. Take the IG's Brazilian section for example, which it ballyhoos as the quintessence of class-struggle militancy. They ran an ex-cop as their candidate for president of a cop-infested union. They won, based on getting the votes of most of the cops in the union! Then when their positions were challenged by a crew of cutthroat opportunists—who had originally been part of their leadership slate—they went running to the capitalist courts, filing suits against the union in order to preserve their union sinecures. When that didn't work, the IG simply declared that the union had become a "court-rigged outfit." Indeed, and they helped make it that way (see "IG's Brazil Cover-Up: Dirty Hands, Cynical Lies," *WV* No. 671, 11 July 1997).

In Mexico, the IG can't tell the difference between the capitalist state and the corporatist unions of the CTM, which they argue "represents the *class enemy*" (*El Internacionalista/Edición México*, May 2001). But not so the equally corporatist unions of the CTV in Venezuela, whose bureaucracy has served as a direct agency of Yankee imperialism and is currently allied with a cabal of bosses trying to bring down the Chávez regime. Here the IG, in a November 2000 Spanish-language article posted on its Web site, finds that the CTV unions "despite their sellout leaderships" are "***workers*** organizations" ("Against Chávez, the Stock Market and the IMF—Venezuela: Mobilize Workers Power to Defeat the Anti-Union Referendum!"). As we wrote in "IG on Venezuela: Opportunism Makes Strange Bedfellows" (*WV* No. 787, 20 September 2002):

> "Like gods on high, the little *caudillos* of the IG decree which unions are real on the basis of their opportunist whims of the moment. In Mexico, the targets of their affections are elements around the PRD [the bourgeois-nationalist Party of the Democratic Revolution]. In Argentina,

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NYC NOTICE

The New York Spartacist League's public office will not be open on Saturday, February 15 due to anti-war mobilizations on that day.

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Science...

(continued from page 5)

Gould and Eldredge proposed that the apparent gaps were real and that rapid evolutionary changes were instigated by external forces, such as sudden climatic changes, volcanic eruptions, or, for example, the asteroid impact at the end of the Cretaceous period which is generally accepted as the cause for the extinction of the dinosaurs some 65 million years ago. Living things, by their very nature, exhibit very nonlinear behavior; success tends to be exponential. Gould wrote a whole book, *Wonderful Life*, describing the spectacular profusion of body types when the first multicellular organisms arose in what is known as the Cambrian explosion, some 540 million years ago. Many of these truly weird creatures became extinct, but all major groups of modern animals inhabiting this planet today have an ancestor going back to the Cambrian creatures.

Gould's punctuated equilibrium has been portrayed by his opponents as an attack on Darwin himself. Punctuated equilibrium is solidly *within* the Darwinian tradition. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin states:

> "As species are produced and exterminated by slowly acting and still existing causes, and not by miraculous acts of creation; and as the most important of all causes of organic change is one which is almost independent of altered and perhaps suddenly altered physical conditions, namely, the mutual relation of organism to organism,—the improvement of one organism entailing the improvement or the extermination of others; it follows, that the amount of organic change in the fossils of consecutive formations probably serves as a fair measure of the relative though not actual lapse of time. A number of species, however, keeping in a body might remain for a long period unchanged, whilst within the same period several of these species by migrating into new countries and coming into competition with foreign associates, might become modified; so that we must not overrate the accuracy of organic change as a measure of time."

Though Darwin here tends to dismiss the effect of sudden environmental changes, it is clear that the reading of the fossil record done by Gould and Eldredge was thoroughly within the Darwinian tradition.

Gould wrote that he, like Darwin, was predisposed to certain ideas reflective of the philosophies of his own times. In regard to the development of punctuated equilibrium, in 1977 he wrote: "It may also not be irrelevant to our personal preferences that one of us learned his Marxism, literally, at his daddy's knee." Gould was reviled for acknowledging his debt to German dialectical philosopher Hegel and Engels and Marx, and he had to fend off criticism from the academic establishment for this for the rest of his life. In his last book, *The Structure of Evolutionary Theory* (2002), he wrote that he was alternately dismissed and attacked supposedly because, among other reasons, "I advanced punctuated equilibrium in order to foster a personal political agenda." Gould's complaint is quite accurate. While perhaps influenced by Marx's idea of dialectical materialism, Gould was never a partisan of Marxist politics.

Gould vs. Creationism

Gould and Eldredge often expressed their anger that anti-scientific zealots would cynically claim that the impact of provable physical phenomena on the course of evolution somehow opened the door to the belief that supernatural forces, i.e., god, could likewise intervene.

Gould spent a large portion of his life not only combatting pseudo-scientific racist ideas but also Christian biblical-based challenges to teaching evolution in the schools. Why in the most technologically and industrially advanced country in the world would the teaching of long-time, universally acknowledged scientific principles be a contentious issue? Why would *Scientific American*, one of the most established science magazines in the country, have to publish a cover article last year titled: "15 Answers to Creationist Nonsense"?

The revival of reactionary attacks on the teaching of evolutionary science arose as part of a much broader rightist offensive aimed at rolling back the gains of the struggles of the 1960s, not least the right to abortion. This came amid a rise in religious reaction internationally, including as an ideological spearhead for capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states—e.g., the Vatican-inspired Solidarność movement in Poland and the CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan.

In 1985, the state of Louisiana mandated that "creation science" (an oxymoron, as Gould has noted) be taught along with evolution. Gould was happy to be an expert witness to testify against teaching creationism in the Louisiana case. We revolutionary Marxists also had an interest in the outcome of this case, and we submitted an *amicus* brief to the Supreme Court appeal. We wrote in our brief that allowing the teaching of the Bible in science classes was a challenge to one of the most basic gains of the American Revolution—the separation of church and state: "The current battle poses the defense of the gains of the American Revolution, Civil War—and the Enlightenment." We raised the Civil War to lay bare the historical roots of black oppression and to make the point that all-sided social reaction, from anti-immigrant chauvinism to anti-abortion bigotry, is always linked to attacks on black people:

> "Evolution, the science of man's 'descent with modification' is the particular object of the fundamentalist religious attack. The reasons for this lie in the fact that evolutionary theory deprives man of a mythical 'special' status in nature, and exposes the lack of scientific basis for the various religious and other justifications for belief in racial inferiority. The not so hidden agenda of the proponents of teaching creationism in the schools is to enforce the destructive and dangerous dogma of racial inferiority."

That the United States has a secular public education system is largely a heritage of the period of Radical Reconstruction following the Civil War, when schools were built widely to teach ex-slaves and poor whites. Today, the proliferation of school voucher programs, the tax credits to subsidize parochial and private schools and the privatization of inner-city school districts are all attacks on the public school system and the separation of church and state, undermining the goal of providing quality education for all. It is no surprise that when the Louisiana decision was finally held to be unconstitutional, Supreme Court justices Rehnquist and Scalia dissented—both are arch supporters of the racist death penalty and opponents of abortion rights. Scalia recently proclaimed in *First Things*, a religion journal, that "government... derives its moral authority from God."

Gould and the "Death of Communism"

Gould, despite what he may have learned at his daddy's knee, was really not more than a left-liberal, one who was comfortable swimming in the stream of petty-bourgeois academics, ex-New Leftists and social democrats such as those around the journal *Rethinking Marxism*. In the aftermath of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, this crowd was "rethinking Marxism" indeed—and abandoned it altogether. For his part, Gould lent his voice to the wave of bourgeois triumphalism over the "death of Communism" in a 1992 essay titled "Life in a Punctuation," where Gould stated that "Marx's economics has failed spectacularly, at least in the largest and longest experiment ever carried out in its name."

We responded with a carefully measured polemic titled "Punctured Equilibrium: Stephen Jay Gould and the Mismeasure of Marx" (*WV* No. 563, 13

IG...

(continued from page 9)

> they adapt to the mass protests against a burgeoning economic catastrophe. And one can only wonder who or what they're chasing after in Venezuela."

"I can call spirits from the vasty deep." "...so can any man; But will they come?"

The same issue of *The Internationalist* that features its "Hard to Starboard" polemic against us reprints an IG leaflet addressed to New York transit workers on the eve of their December contract expiration. It too is full of "fightback" rhetoric—strike now, burn the injunctions, shred the Taylor Law. The IG declaims that while we "raised a series of demands on safety, health care, the Democratic Party, the Taylor Law," we did not call for a strike until after the transit workers had voted in mass meetings of thousands to take strike action. That's right. Our business is not phony agitation but fighting to arm the workers with a political program from which class-struggle tactics and strategy derive.

The American Trotskyists whose militants led the pitched battles on the streets of Minneapolis in 1934 that laid the basis for forging the Teamsters as a powerful industrial union did so not by screaming "strike now." Rather they made a sober calculation of the forces of the capitalist class enemy and fought to build the consciousness, confidence and fighting strength of the workers to engage in battle. Three years later as the economy took another dive, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon, a seasoned class-struggle militant who played a critical role in the Minneapolis strikes, cautioned trade-union supporters in auto against agitating for strike action: "Watch your policy carefully, we mustn't be too radical now with the slack season coming on. We must not holler too insistently about strikes and so on. We must direct the attention mainly to bureaucracy and reactionary policies in the union. But we must be very careful about agitating for strikes when the workers will be under such disadvantage."

But when struggle was engaged, the Trotskyists stood in the front ranks with the workers and against the bosses. And when the transit workers voted to strike, our front-page article, headlined "For a Solid NYC Transit Strike!" (*WV* No. 793, 13 December 2002), argued:

> "Behind the hysterical threats being directed at the TWU is the recognition that the union has the power to shut NYC down cold. The city manifestly cannot arrest 34,000 strikers or otherwise run the buses and subways in the face of a solid strike. You can't run the subways with bayonets! Should the government invoke the Taylor Law, this should be met by strike actions mobilizing the power of the entire NYC labor movement. If the transit union proceeds with militancy and determination, in conjunction with other city unions, the labor movement could win a much needed victory that could put into motion a counteroffensive against the bosses."

The IG points to a motion it "put forward in a leaflet" (whatever that means) at a December 4 meeting of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Delegates Assembly in New York City calling on the union to join transit workers' picket lines and to "help initiate an immediate citywide mobilization of all NYC workers" in solidarity with a transit strike. All well and good. Except that what passes without mention is the fact that backstabbing UFT president Randi Weingarten had *openly denounced a possible transit strike*, declaring that it "would effectively cripple our economy." To be sure, that doesn't mean that one doesn't fight to mobilize the union. But to successfully prosecute such a struggle means fighting against the obstacles that stand in the road, foremost among them the labor bureaucrats whose class-collaborationist policies shackle the power of the unions.

As we have noted elsewhere of the IG's phony agitational rhetoric: "One could posit that Norden and his sidekick Negrete have been so overcome by megalomaniacal delusions of their own grandeur that they actually believe that if they call for the workers to act they will. In fact, it is pure cynicism in the service not of combatting the current misleaders of the proletariat but of accommodating to them" (see "IG: Simple-Minded Lies and Simple-Minded Liars," *WV* No. 785, 9 August 2002). And the more we expose their political accommodation to forces ranging from Latino nationalism to the Stalinist bureaucracy to "leftists" who stood on the side of capitalist counterrevolution, the more the IG invents new lies.

Thus, the IG now claims that we caved in to the union-busting offensive led by then-mayor Rudolph Giuliani against the transit workers union in 1999, which outlawed even the right to talk about strike action. "The SL followed the rules," the IG declares, arguing that we dropped any call for strike action like a "hot potato." In fact our 14 December 1999 leaflet, which the IG points to as its evidence, very clearly stated: "The TWU and the rest of the NYC labor movement have the power to roll back this assault on the unions through massive strike action."

The IG's slanders are merely a demonstration of its own political bankruptcy, witnessed in its inability to answer an ever-growing number of our recent polemics against them (see "IG Disappears Red Army Fight Against Islamic Reaction in Afghanistan," *WV* No. 772, 11 January 2002; "IG: Simple-Minded Lies and Simple-Minded Liars" and "IG on Venezuela: Opportunism Makes Strange Bedfellows," both cited above; "Cynics and Demagogues: An IG Provocation," *WV* No. 789, 18 October 2002). Their current chicken-baiting of us over the showdown on the docks and the New York City transit workers union battle recalls nothing so much as the knight in the movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* who, having had both his arms and legs cut off, screams, "Come back here you coward!" To say that such a crew is hardly a force for even passing consideration as any kind of leadership for the proletariat is a vast understatement. ■

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November 1992). In that article, we explained that it was not Marxism but its antithesis *Stalinism* which had failed, a point predicted by Leon Trotsky in his classic 1936 book *The Revolution Betrayed*. Gould's impressionistic pronouncement on the failure of Marxism was less apostasy than a reflection of American liberal academic opinion—always a weathervane whipped about by prevailing ruling-class ideology. As Gould himself had explained in *The Mismeasure of Man*, science is not at all some rarified exercise of pure reason; rather it is bound up with the prevailing material and cultural circumstances of the times in which the scientist lives, particularly when the subject is human biology, behavior and history.

Pseudo-socialists associated with journals or organizations such as *Against the Current*, Socialist Action and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) wrote paeans to Gould on the occasion of his death while at the same time disappearing his repudiation of Marxism. Why is that? In the case of the ISO, they have always embraced "democratic" imperialism and opposed defense of the gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution, hailing the capitalist counterrevolution in Russia. As for *Against the Current* and Socialist Action, they hailed every reactionary, priest-riddled, nationalist anti-Soviet opposition nurtured by Western imperialism that arose in East Europe, most notably Polish Solidarność. The capitulation of these renegades to bourgeois anti-Sovietism was and is a conscious betrayal of their stated adherence to socialism and working-class liberation.

Rocks of Ages: Gould Returns to God

In 1999 Gould compiled an entire volume devoted to the reconciliation of science and religion, a perfectly logical extension of his disillusioned political world outlook. Gould argued that science and religion did not conflict, and he coined a phrase, "non-overlapping magisteria" or "NOMA," to describe this relationship. He claimed that science covers the empirical realm and religion addresses "ultimate meaning and moral value." Gould may have never claimed to be an atheist in his earlier days, but he never particularly campaigned *for* religion either. In his 1999 book *Rocks of Ages*, Gould uses his usual witty anecdotal style, but this time he presents a philosophical justification for religion in general. He goes so far as to present an apologia for the Catholic church's persecution of Galileo. Galileo's observations of the planets (and particularly the moons of Jupiter) did indeed challenge the long-held view of an earth-centered universe. At one point in the book, Gould acknowledges:

"The basic facts cannot be gainsaid: Galileo was cruelly treated (forced to recant on his knees, and then placed under the equivalent of house arrest for the remainder of his life), and he was right; his conflict with the Pope did, to cite the best modern work on the subject (*Galileo, Courtier*, by Mario Biagioli, University of Chicago Press, 1993), represent 'the clash between two incompatible worldviews,' and [Pope] Urban did defend the traditional geocentric universe as established dogma."

Cristiano Banti

Galileo was convicted by the Inquisition for maintaining that the earth goes around the sun.

But on the facing page (page 73), Gould puts the onus on Galileo!

> "But Galileo moved too fast and too far in an unnecessarily provocative manner. He had lived his life in necessary pursuit of courtly patronage, but now he fell from grace and into a common role of his time and place. In Biagioli's words: 'Galileo's career was propelled and then undone by...patronage dynamics'."

Contrast this to the earlier Gould, who wrote in *The Mismeasure of Man*:

> "Galileo was not shown the instruments of torture in an abstract debate about lunar motion. He had threatened the Church's conventional argument for social and doctrinal stability: the static world order with planets circling about a central earth, priests subordinate to the Pope and serfs to their lord."

Science and religion *are* bitter enemies. Religion arose in the most primitive times out of ignorance and helplessness in the face of a world of unknown forces. Lightning, thunder, fire and flood—the seemingly implacable forces of nature were deified. Rituals and sacrifices were carried out to placate the gods and appeal for succor in the here and now. With the invention of agriculture—allowing for the creation of surplus wealth—and the advent of class society, religion took on a social function, legitimizing the rule of the oppressing class as part of "divine will." Since then, religion has served as an ideological mainstay for the oppression of women, centrally through the institution of the family, instilling patriarchal submission and dictating that women be chained to hearth and home.

Although the spectacular advances in science in the epoch of capitalism should undermine and narrow the basis for spirituality, the ruling class perpetuates religious mystification to obscure the roots of capitalist exploitation and oppression and to reconcile the masses to their "fate." And, as Marx observed at the advent of industrial capitalism, for the dispossessed and exploited masses, religion serves as solace, "the opium of the people." The faithful may still pray for divine help in case of disease, but all hopes for an end to the misery of daily life is put off until death and the supposed afterlife. How very convenient for those that lord it over us in this life! In the Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S., we note:

> "When it was an ascending class, the bourgeoisie embraced the Enlightenment in its struggle against the old feudal order and its ideological bulwark, the church. Yet soon after the capitalists triumphed, they turned about and encouraged organized religion as one more means to prop up their class rule. Today, late in the epoch of imperialist decay, the bourgeois ideologues of the most powerful capitalist countries on the planet explicitly reject Enlightenment rationalism, embracing irrationality as a weapon against the proletarian revolution."

In his later years, Gould declared that morality and "ultimate meaning" can only come from religion. Whose morality? Concepts like morality and ultimate meaning have always been defined by and served the class interests of those in power. What is moral for one class may be immoral for another, as each class has its own interests. Engels writes in the 1888 book *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*: "In reality every class, even every profession, has its own morality, and even this it violates whenever it can do so with impunity."

The ABC of Communism (1919), a primer of basic communist ideology based on the program of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik), states:

> "Man has been extremely successful in the struggle with nature. He influences nature in his own interests, and controls natural forces, achieving these conquests, not thanks to his faith in God and in divine assistance, but in spite of this faith. He achieves his conquests thanks to the fact that in practical life and in all serious matters he invariably conducts himself as an atheist."

Gould never claimed to be a Marxist, or an atheist for that matter. His accommodation to religion at the end of his life is not really a negation of his worldview but something of a cop-out. We are left with a bitter taste: Darwin freed the study of biology from the clasping grip of religion by providing a materialist explanation for the evolution of life on this planet. Gould devoted the better part of his career to defense of Darwin and opposition to the creationists whose interpretation of "NOMA" is "no more evolution." Carl Sagan, Gould's contemporary, also succumbed to malignant disease, but near his end he never wrote anything so wretched as *Rocks of Ages*. Sagan's last book was *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*, a forthright defense of science against religious superstitions. We also appreciate the comments of physicist Steven Weinberg, who candidly stated:

> "I am all in favor of a dialogue between science and religion, but not a constructive dialogue. One of the great achievements of science has been, if not to make it impossible for intelligent people to be religious, then at least to make it possible for them to not be religious."
>
> —"A Designer Universe?"
> *New York Review of Books*,
> 21 October 1999

The full liberation of humanity from religion and all its attendant backwardness and superstition will never occur under capitalism, with its grotesque class divisions and adulation of religious mythology. When all the bishops, bankers and bosses are swept aside by a victorious proletarian revolution, the material basis will be laid for a truly liberated humanity. Then, and only then, will the limits to each individual man and woman be set by their own creative powers, freed at last from the shackles of class divisions, poverty and religion.■

This pamphlet reprints presentations given by SL Central Committee member Joseph Seymour on the origins of Marxism in the French Enlightenment and in left Hegelianism.

Also included are "150 Years of the Communist Manifesto" and "Marxism and Religion."

In the retrograde climate of post-Soviet reaction, the struggle to reassert the validity of the program and purpose of revolutionary Marxism is crucial for our fight for new October Revolutions.

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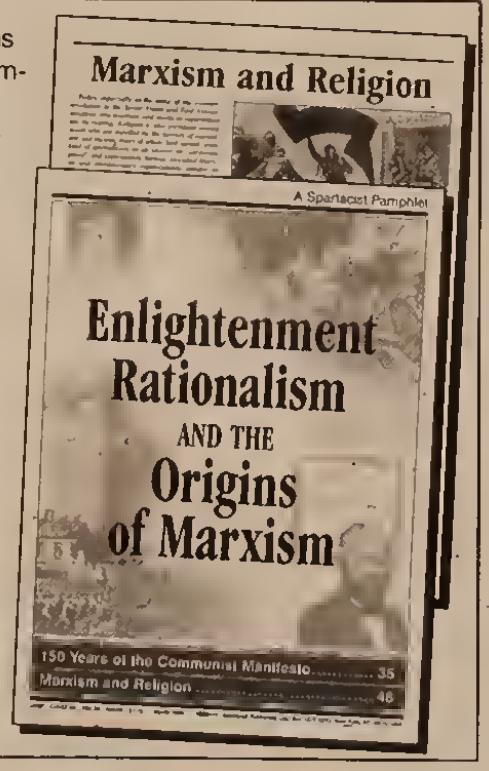

Abortion...

(continued from page 12)

Today, with Bush poised to name the next Supreme Court appointee, the feminists wait prostrate for the ax to fall. Desperately seeking to appease the enemies of women's rights, the lobbying group originally called the National Abortion Rights Action League has changed its name four times, most recently removing the "a" word completely by renaming themselves "NARAL Pro-Choice America." In a 23 January *New York Times* op-ed piece authored jointly by leaders of NARAL and Right to Life of Michigan, they commit themselves to finding a "number of important issues on which we agree."

The feminists' strategy of appealing to the Democrats has left abortion rights activists disarmed in the face of Bush's assaults. Even before the midterm elections, the Bush administration had already been packing the federal departments that oversee social programs and make medical policy with appointees whose only credentials are their belief in Christian biblical literalism. David Hager, now head of the FDA Reproductive Health Drugs Advisory Committee, opposes all forms of birth control, has written a book on how Jesus healed women and advises sufferers from PMS to pray! The head of the AIDS advisory committee is one Tom Coburn, who opposes condom use and advocates abstinence. And the history of Charles Pickering, nominee to the U.S. Court of Appeals, includes opposition to interracial marriage.

The government's withholding of federal funding for embryonic stem-cell research has set back this promising area of medical research for years. Bush aide Karl Rove has been conjuring up ignorant and fantastic human cloning scenarios that have nothing to do with this vital research, which may lead to cures for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and many other currently incurable diseases. Even right-wing stalwarts like Department of Health and Human Services head Tommy Thompson and Nancy Reagan, fearing for their own mortal selves and their families, are breaking ranks over opposition to this medical breakthrough.

The deep-seated oppression of women is rooted in the institution of the family which, along with religion, serves the capitalist class as a bedrock of social conservatism, bourgeois morality and submission to authority. And in racist, capitalist America, working-class, black and immigrant women are daily denied the right to basic health care, access to contraception and the means to adequately feed, house and educate their children. The fight to defend women's rights, including the right to abortion, must be generalized and broadened into a struggle against the entire capitalist system. Only socialist revolution can begin to lay the material basis for the full liberation of women from economic dependence and for their complete social integration.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

For Free Abortion on Demand!

Bush Declares War on Women's Rights

AP

With the Republicans gaining control of both houses of Congress as well as the White House, the Bush administration is stepping up its campaign to end abortion rights and limit availability of contraceptives. Days before the 30th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion, Bush took the opportunity to ominously re-consecrate his crusade by proclaiming a "National Sanctity of Human Life Day." The "human life" referred to herein excludes poor mothers who have been thrown off welfare and are supposed to find nonexistent jobs with little or no health care or childcare; it excludes frightened teenagers who desperately seek freedom from unwanted pregnancies or who are simply trying to get some accurate information about sex at school; it excludes thousands of people on death row; and it certainly excludes the countless Iraqis whose deaths the Bush gang is currently planning.

Bush's proclamation cited his efforts to create "compassionate alternatives to abortion," summed up by two options: lifetime heterosexual monogamous marriage (sex being for procreation only), and for all others—abstinence. Reversing the right to abortion would mean a return to the days when women risked being maimed in back-alley abortions or died attempting to self-abort.

The massive assault against abortion rights is a culmination of years of attacks by both the Democrats and Republicans against poor and minority women in particular. Clinton and the "pro-choice" Democrats had no problem axing welfare benefits that dated back to the 1930s while pontificating on "family values." Since the legal right to abortion is still supported by the majority of the population, the anti-abortion zealots' strategy from day one has been to trim around the edges to undermine any possibility of real access to an abortion in a timely manner. The banning of late-term abortions has been one of the favored battlefronts of the anti-abortion forces, who have dubbed the procedure "partial birth" abortion. The attacks on abortion rights embolden fascistic terrorists who bomb abortion clinics and murder abortion providers. In Buffalo, New York, bloodthirsty anti-abortion zealots staged a demonstration on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* hailing the 1998 shooting death of Dr. Barnett Slepian, an abortion provider. That such outright terror has decreased in recent years is largely because the anti-abortionists' agenda is becoming the law of the land.

Planned Parenthood reports that as a result of a 1992 U.S. Supreme Court decision allowing states to pass laws to curtail abortions, 335 anti-abortion laws have been passed over the last seven years. According to the Guttmacher Institute, the number of abortion providers has declined in 38 states and 87 percent of American counties have no abortion clinics. And if you make it to a clinic and endure the waiting period, then you have to run the gauntlet of the "right-to-life" fanatics who line the sidewalks. For teenagers, the restrictions are far worse, including often being forced to get their parents' permission. Nevertheless, the U.S. has one of the highest rates of abortions in industrialized countries due primarily to strictures on access to contraceptives, particularly for poor women.

In the tradition of the Fugitive Slave Law, which mandated that escaped slaves be returned to bondage even if found in a free state, the House recently passed the Child Custody Protection Act, which would make it a federal crime for anyone other than the parent to take a minor across state lines to obtain an abortion. In August, Bush signed the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, requiring that an aborted fetus showing signs of life be considered a person under federal law. In September, the House passed the "Abortion Non-Discrimination Act," which guarantees that hospitals refusing to perform abortions won't be penalized.

While shredding the rights of the population, the Bush White House has waged a crusade for the supposed rights of the "unborn." This is not simply an ideological assault: the so-called rights of fetuses are used to criminalize poor women. In May 2001, Regina McKnight, a homeless black woman in South Carolina, was sentenced to 12 years in prison without parole for giving birth to a stillborn child because she supposedly used drugs.

The Bush administration's war on women's rights extends to impoverished women across the globe, where nearly 150,000 women die each year from unwanted pregnancies. At the December 2002 United Nations regional family planning conference in Bangkok, the U.S. delegation stalled the conference by attempting to force their anti-birth control program on the delegates. In a grotesque display of imperialist arrogance, delegates from impoverished countries such as India, Indonesia and Pakistan were forced to listen to an American delegate lecture on how women should use thermometers to check ovulation! Three years ago, the U.S. banned aid to all international family planning organizations that counsel women on abortion. This has meant increased unwanted pregnancies resulting in illegal, unsafe and deadly abortions as well as the spread of HIV/AIDS. For example, the U.S. has discontinued supplying condoms to the Philippines, where HIV/AIDS is on the rise (see "Church and State vs. Women in the Philippines," *WV* No. 790, 1 November 2002).

Sarah Weddington, the brave Texas lawyer for "Jane Roe," recently remarked in an interview that she was taken by surprise at the current threats to reverse the 1973 court decision. She thought they had won an ironclad right, but now "it looks like sandstone" (*Newsday*, 15 January). Under capitalism, democratic rights are always limited, temporary and reversible. The *Roe v. Wade* ruling came out of massive social upheavals around the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements in the 1960s and '70s. At the time, the reformists who dominated the women's rights protests sought out capitalist politicians as allies and limited their demands to the single issue of legalizing abortion, which could not in itself meet the needs of working-class and poor women who could not afford the procedure. The Spartacist League counterposed the slogans "Free abortion on demand!" and "Free quality health care for all!" and raised the call for a revolutionary party which would fight for the liberation of women as part of the struggle for working-class revolution.

The Spartacist League has fought for mass mobilizations, backed by the power of labor, to defend the abortion clinics against the "pro-life" bigots. In joining in defense of the clinics, we have always emphasized that the Democrats are no friends of women or any of the oppressed. The fragility of abortion rights today is a perfect example of the consequences of liberals and reformists *demobilizing* mass struggle in the belief that the capitalist state can be a guarantor of democratic rights.

In the 1980s, many feminists joined the "moral majority" conservatives in calling for censorship of pornography and fed into the witchhunt against day-care workers by echoing the reactionaries' bogus "Satanic ritual abuse" charges.

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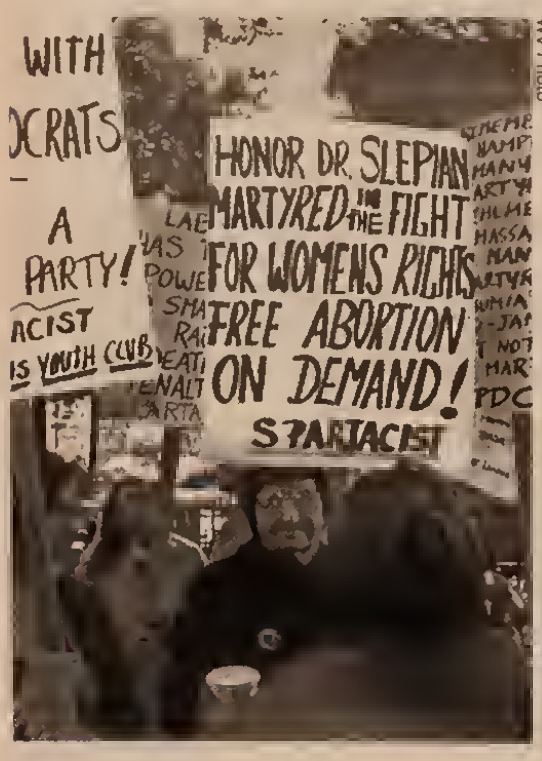

WV Photo

Ellen Nepris

SL sign at October 1998 NYC protest honors Dr. Barnett Slepian, murdered by anti-abortion terrorist. Right: Women's clinic in Texas after 1985 firebombing.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 798

28 February 2003

Interimperialist Rivalries Heat Up

Countdown to Desert Slaughter

Defend Iraq!

U.S. Navy

Millions Protest Around the World

FEBRUARY 24—As many as a million people took to the streets of American cities on February 15 and 16 to protest the impending war against Iraq, despite concerted government efforts to intimidate the populace with a "code orange" terror alert and a police ban on a march in New York City. Millions more marched in every major capital of West Europe—London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Madrid—and in hundreds of cities around the world. Public opinion polls show that a large majority of West Europeans view the present government of the United States as the greatest danger to world peace. In pursuing their own imperialist aims, the rulers of France and Germany are now appealing to this pacifistic sentiment and anti-American nationalism. A senior French official pontificated that if the U.S. goes to war without the sanction of a UN resolution, this will mean a return to "the law of the jungle."

Predictably, the Bush White House has responded to all this with the arrogance born of overwhelming military superiority. The Pentagon budget is greater than the combined total military spending of all other major states in the world. Hence the French and German leaders are forced to confront the U.S. only at the diplomatic level and then fairly cautiously. In the councils of NATO, they made a big show of opposing a U.S. move for additional weapons for Turkey, a member state, and then relented after a few weeks. Now France has joined in the hue and cry over Iraq's supposedly illegal al-Samoud 2 missile arsenal—which have a range of barely 100 miles—with a government spokesman vigorously denying any "particular leniency with regard to Iraq" (Reuters, 23 February). With over 200,000 U.S. and British troops poised to invade and occupy the country, the imperialists vindictively demand that Iraq destroy what defensive weapons it has.

This would be a predatory and imperialist war on the part of the U.S. but a just and defensive war on the part of Iraq. Military defense of Iraq does not mean any political support to the bloody and oppressive Saddam Hussein regime. Particularly given the overwhelming military superiority of U.S. imperialism, the chief means of defending Iraq lies in class struggle against the imperialist rulers in

continued on page 10

WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated contingent at February 16 antiwar demonstration in San Francisco.

Italian Workers Block Arms Shipments

On February 21 trade unionists and antiwar activists blocked railway lines being used to transport 26 convoys loaded with weapons, amphibious vehicles and armored cars from the Camp Ederle NATO base in Vicenza to the Camp Darby NATO logistics depot in Livorno, Tuscany. Camp Darby is one of the largest logistics bases and ammunition depots in Europe, and provided crucial support for the first Gulf War and the Balkans War. The final destination of the military shipment was reported to be the NATO airbase in Incirlik, Turkey—the U.S. military's choice as launching pad for a northern strike against Iraq. Turkish workers at Incirlik have staged a number of strikes in the past and should be encouraged by the Italian workers' example to take class-struggle action against the predatory war of U.S. imperialism and its allies against Iraq.

The alert on the train shipments came from members of the transport union FILT, which organizes rail workers, longshoremen, bus and metro workers, as well as airport workers. A group of rail workers in Genoa alerted their co-workers in Livorno to "be ready to organize some actions." One of the workers in Livorno stated: "Many of us are ready to refuse to drive these trains of death. It's our way of making a contribution to peace" (*Il Manifesto*, 23 February). Leaflets were put out in the local train stations, spreading the word. In the next hours groups of people gathered at train stations and key railroad junctions to stop the military convoys on the tracks. The whole day of February 22 the convoys were chased around northeast Italy by protesters, as the authorities kept switching routes to evade antiwar blockades. *La Repubblica* (23 February) reported that the only way train convoys got through to Camp Darby was under protection of the police and *carabinieri*. In Fornovo, 50 cops savagely attacked protesters blocking the railroad. Evoking Alleanza Nazionale's roots as the historic party of Italian fascism, AN leader Ignazio La Russa ominously demanded that

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Italy...

(continued from page 1)

the state "use the iron fist" against anti-war protesters. Undeterred, dockers in Livorno have made clear that they have no intention of loading this material on the ships. On Sunday, February 23, military convoys were again brought to a halt in a nationwide railway strike by the ORSA union, which is part of COBAS (Rank and File Committees). Although this strike was over economic issues and working conditions, it shows that *every* successful fight for the workers' class interests now breaks a cog in the imperialists' war machines.

Several unions have issued statements promising action against moving military cargo. The FILT issued a statement that "railroadmen must not be used to drive or unload weapons shipments" and that "all legitimate union actions will be undertaken to prevent any strategic support to an illegitimate war" (*Liberazione*, 22 February). The Tuscan branches of the FILT and the CGIL (the union confederation to which FILT is affiliated) have announced that railway and port workers will boycott the transportation of arms. Following the declaration by Minister of Defense Martino that the ports would be used to provide logistical support to the war, the FILT in Genoa, Italy's largest port, declared their "maximal vigilance so that no collaboration, either direct or indirect, will be given to the warmakers." A leader of the powerful metal workers union, FIOM, announced that "if, as they say, the armed intervention should happen around March 5, there'll be an immediate popular mobilization including also strike action."

In appealing for defense of Iraq against imperialist attack, we have stressed that above all this means class struggle against capitalist rule in the imperialist states. The potential strength of the labor movement lies in its strategic ability to shut down the economic production and distribution of goods. In mobilizing its power, not simply in protest demonstrations but in political strike action against the war, the Italian transport workers, as well as Scottish train drivers (see article this issue), have pointed the way forward for workers in the U.S. and elsewhere in the world.

In 1969, Livorno railworkers went on strike against the Vietnam War and received a medal from the Vietnamese fighters made of metal from a downed U.S. warplane. Italian workers were also in the forefront of struggle against the Balkans War in 1999. Over a million workers joined in a one-day political strike initiated by the syndicalist COBAS around the slogan "Not a life, not a lira for this war." COBAS at the Fiat auto plants and elsewhere were also instrumental in launching a fund drive for Yugoslav workers after the Zastava auto plant in Kragujevac, Yugoslavia was bombed and destroyed by NATO. ICL sections participated actively in the Zastava fund drive, which provided a useful vehicle for working people to take a concrete stand against their own imperialist butchers.

In response to the actions by the train drivers, the right-wing government of Silvio Berlusconi (an ally of Bush and a crony of British prime minister Blair) has threatened to call out troops to move the military convoys. It is notable that this task would not be entrusted to the regular conscript troops, but to elite military engineers units. This points to the deep unpopularity of the war, which some 75 percent of the Italian population opposes. Berlusconi's gambit could well backfire. The Italian working class should massively resist any efforts at strikebreaking by the military and the fascist guard dogs of the capitalist class. Key to this is the formation of *workers defense guards*. Moreover, workers must oppose not only the dispatch of American troops and matériel to Iraq, but *Italian militarism* as well. The government recently rammed through an increase of funding for the Italian expeditionary force to Afghanistan and dispatched another 1,000 Italian troops there and extended other military operations abroad, particularly in the Balkans. Not a penny, not a person for the Italian imperialist military!

Corrado Pedon/Infophoto

Vicenza, Italy: Train shipping military equipment for U.S. war against Iraq blocked by trade unionists and antiwar activists.

However, there is a considerable gap between the felt desire to struggle against the war on the part of many Italian workers and the reformist perspective offered by the trade-union leaders and mass workers parties. Citing anti-union laws that strictly regulate strike activity, the trade-union tops are seeking to wriggle out of any sharp confrontation with the state. In 1999, the rail union leadership called off a strike because the "left" government at the time was supporting the Balkans War. One union engineer challenged the union leadership: "We are chained to 'anti-strike' laws. We cannot afford to let a co-worker be jailed for conscientious objection, but if the national and regional [union] secretaries take the lead, we are ready to follow" (*Liberazione*, 23 February).

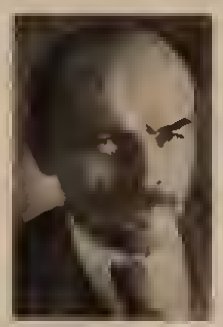
Instead, the secretaries of the two largest union federations, the CGIL and the CISL, formally requested a meeting with the government to discuss "what is supposed to be transported and to get guarantees for the safety of the transport workers." Any attempt to arrive at "ground rules" for transporting war materials with the Berlusconi government can only herald a sellout. Some union leaders like former CGIL head Sergio Cofferati, who praised the railway workers, have embraced the concept of "civil disobedience," the better to dissolve the crucial proletarian centrality of these actions against the war into an undifferentiated popular mass protest. CGIL leader Guglielmo Epifani declared himself "in favor of political struggle against the military convoys but against obstructing the railway." A spokesman for the civil disobedience protesters retorted that "In the end they were overruled by their own members. In fact it is the railway workers, the members of their union who supported us and supplied the information on the plans to move the trains loaded with American arms" (*La Repubblica*, 23 February). Elected workers' action committees are necessary to put the power of the unity and discipline of the workers movement behind these antiwar actions, particularly as the union tops threaten to leave the militants out to hang by themselves.

Fausto Bertinotti, the leader of the left reformist Rifondazione Comunista (RC), recently declared that "it is now possible to think about a European general strike against the war." But a general strike would mean a decisive confrontation with the capitalist order, posing the question, "which class shall rule?" This is *not* what Bertinotti and RC really have in mind. Thus, RC recently published an article headlined "Paris-Berlin, the Axis of Peace." In reality RC fights not to get rid of capitalism and replace it with proletarian rule, but simply wants to get rid of the Berlusconi government and replace it with a more "left" bourgeois government whose foreign policy is aligned against Washington. Bertinotti seeks to manipulate and exploit the combative militancy of the Italian proletariat for RC's own parliamentary ambitions, and not to satisfy the workers' class interests, as any examination of RC's role proves. Prior to the Balkans War, RC gave de facto support to the "Ulivo" government, a popular-front coalition of the social-democratic Democratici di Sinistra and openly bourgeois parties. RC helped enact the racist anti-immigrant Turco-Napolitano laws and other attacks on workers' rights and supported the dispatch of Italian troops to Albania.

Many of the auto workers at Fiat who politically led the proletariat in taking a side with the victims of imperialism's war in the Balkans by launching the Zastava campaign have lost their social power and their livelihoods as Fiat axed tens of thousands of jobs as part of the worldwide economic retrenchment. RC's response was to appeal to the reactionary Berlusconi government to nationalize Fiat. Predictably this had no impact whatsoever, inasmuch as the purpose of capitalist governments is not to preserve jobs for workers, but rather to preserve profits for the bosses. Just as today it appeals against the use of NATO bases in Italy on the grounds that it undermines "our own national sovereignty," the RC campaign on Fiat sought to whip up nationalist sentiment against the possibility that Fiat would be bought out by General Motors, an American firm. As if the Italian bosses were one bit better than their American counterparts!

Particularly in Italy, workers fed up with parliamentary betrayals have turned toward the syndicalist COBAS, which on occasion have engaged in exemplary political struggles against war, as in the Zastava campaign. But the difference between militant trade unionism or even radical syndicalism, on the one hand, and genuine Marxism is that the latter seeks not only to mobilize workers in political struggle against war, but to raise the consciousness of the proletariat to the understanding that it has the power to get rid of the system of capitalist exploitation and imperialist plunder through socialist revolution. Militants engaged in actions against the war should broaden this into a struggle against capitalism itself. Down with the scourges of unemployment, racism and imperialist war! For a sliding scale of hours and wages—Jobs for all with no cut in pay! Smash the anti-immigrant laws—Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Down with Italian militarism! For workers independence from the capitalist state—Down with popular-frontism! Above all what is necessary is a Leninist vanguard party, forged through relentless struggle against the reformist misleaders like Rifondazione.■

TROTSKY



LENIN

Women and Imperialist War

This year as we commemorate International Women's Day, March 8, the U.S. imperialists are about to launch a devastating attack on semicolonial Iraq. In the massive protests internationally against the impending war, we have called for military defense of Iraq and for class struggle against the imperialist rulers at home. As seen in the following draft resolution to a 1915 International Socialist Women's conference, Lenin's Bolsheviks fought to transform mass sentiment against the slaughter of World War I, a war between the imperialist powers for redivision of the world, into a struggle for workers revolution against the capitalist order.

This war is an imperialist one, caused by the struggle between the ruling classes of various countries for a division of the colonies and domination of the world market, and by dynastic interests. It is a natural continuation of the policy conducted by the class of capitalists and the governments of all countries....

The horrible suffering caused by this war awakens in all women, especially proletarian women, a growing desire for peace. Declaring *war on all imperialist* war, the conference at the same time believes that if this desire for peace is to be transformed into a *conscious political force, working women must well realise that the propertied classes are striving for nothing* but annexations, conquest and domination, that in the epoch of imperialism wars are inevitable, and that imperialism threatens the world with a series of wars, unless the *proletariat musters enough strength to put an end to the capitalist system by the final overthrow of capitalism.* Every working woman who wants to shorten the period of suffering connected with the epoch of imperialist wars, must strive to have her urge for peace develop into *indignation and struggle for socialism. The working woman will attain her aim* in this struggle *only through a revolutionary mass movement, and a strengthening and sharpening of the socialist struggle.*

—V.I. Lenin, "Draft Resolution of the International Socialist Women's Conference" (June 1915)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The closing date for news in this issue is 25 February.

No. 798 **28 February 2003**

Young Spartacus

Capitalism, Gun Control, Racism and War

A Review

United Artists

By Laura DeMatteis

Writer and filmmaker Michael Moore has made a bang in theaters internationally with his funny and compelling new documentary, *Bowling for Columbine*, a raw examination of guns in American culture. Moore's ironic and provocative style is well known from his earlier acclaimed film *Roger and Me*—roasting General Motors for the company's devastating mass layoffs of Midwest auto workers in the 1980s—as well as his recent best-selling book lampooning the Bush administration, *Stupid White Men and Other Sorry Excuses for the Nation*.

Convinced that Americans are gun-crazy, Moore tries to uncover the reason why the U.S. has over 11,000 gun-related deaths a year, more than any other country. *Bowling for Columbine* is dedicated to victims of gun violence, and its title is a satirical reference to the bowling class attended by the two infamous Columbine killers the morning before shooting up their high school. In the movie, Moore interviews Lockheed Martin executives, fascistic paramilitary militiamen, the patriotic and reactionary NRA president Charlton Heston, an impressively eloquent Marilyn Manson (whose music was scapegoated in the media for the Columbine shootings) and travels to Canada, painting it as an idyllic "haven" from violence.

Moore seems quite aware of many of the problems of American capitalism. The movie touches on poverty, racism—its roots and media perpetuation—as well as crimes of U.S. imperialism under both Republican and Democratic presidencies. Notable in the current era of post-9/11 raging patriotism, a short montage graphically portrays a litany of crimes of the U.S. government, ending with an image of the World Trade Center attack with the caption: "Osama bin Laden uses his expert CIA training to murder 3,000 people." This scene, more than anything else, really ruffled the feathers of the bourgeoisie. So the *New York Times* (11 October 2002) published a scathing review commenting on the scene's caption: "The idiocy of this statement is hardly worth engaging; it is exactly the kind of glib distortion of history that can be taken as a warrant to dismiss everything Mr. Moore has to say."

Though *Bowling for Columbine* astutely comments on the problems of American society, the movie's suggested solutions are all wrong. Moore concludes that what makes America so uniquely violent is a "culture of fear"—a fanatical paranoia inflamed by the media. But such fear can take hold only to the extent that it feeds on a brutal social order. Although himself a lifetime member of the NRA, Moore ends by advocating, at least for now, restricting access to guns while pushing to make the government and corporations more humane and less violent. Moore's politics prevent him from seeing the larger truth—that American "democracy" can only be violent, racist and class-divided because at its core is a system based on exploitation and racial oppression: capitalism.

Certainly, today a climate of fear and hysteria *is* being whipped up by the capitalist rulers who use the cry of "national unity" to justify their bloodthirsty war aims against Iraq and the intensification of repression of immigrants, blacks and labor. The U.S. capitalist state is a killing machine equipped with nuclear weapons which relies on trigger-happy racist cops and death chamber executions to terrorize the population at home. It's no wonder many Americans—not just right-wingers but immigrants, blacks, workers—fear being disarmed. And in the interests of the working class and all the oppressed, the right to bear arms needs to be defended.

Today minorities and working people are the special targets of the violence spawned by American capitalism, as they are starved by ghetto poverty and a lack of jobs, incarcerated under the pretext of the "war on drugs" and sent off to be cannon fodder for American imperialist war. It is a reflection of the decades of bipartisan attacks and desperate living conditions of the urban masses that homicide statistics for 2002 show heavily black and immigrant Oakland at more than 100 and central Los Angeles *at over 650*. In one powerful scene in *Bowling for Columbine*, overlapping segments of newscasters repeating "black male" and clips from the television show *Cops* illustrate how the "war on drugs" grotesquely glorifies police violence and paints black people as predatory criminals. And one of the funniest moments in the film shows a series of newscast excerpts sounding the alarm about an invasion of "Africanized" bees coming north from Latin America—unlike the tamer, friendlier "European" variety, the "Africanized" bees are dangerous, aggressive and uncontrollable.

The media certainly uses racist stereotypes of the black urban poor as criminals in an attempt to justify police occupation of the ghettos. Yet the media does not *produce* a racist society. The owners of the media are themselves capitalists who seek to perpetuate the domination of their class, whose rule is based on a system that is racist from the ground up.

Capitalist Violence and Black Oppression

In the end, Moore misses the most fundamental answer to the question "Why is America so violent?" that he spends the whole movie pursuing. In fact, there *is* something very unique to American capitalism: the special oppression of black people, directly linked to the violent legacy of chattel slavery. In an insightful article entitled "Deadly Symbiosis," UC Berkeley sociology professor Loïc Wacquant reminds us that the subjugation and dispossession of blacks in the U.S. has persisted through four major institutions: slavery, the Jim Crow system, the urban ghetto, and now, the expanding prison system. We say that in the U.S. blacks constitute a race-color caste, forcibly segregated socially but integrated into the capitalist economy at the bottom. With the de-industrialization Moore chronicled in *Roger and Me*, blacks who were once relied upon as a "reserve army" of labor when needed for industry have been increasingly deemed a surplus population by the ruling class, thrown out of work and

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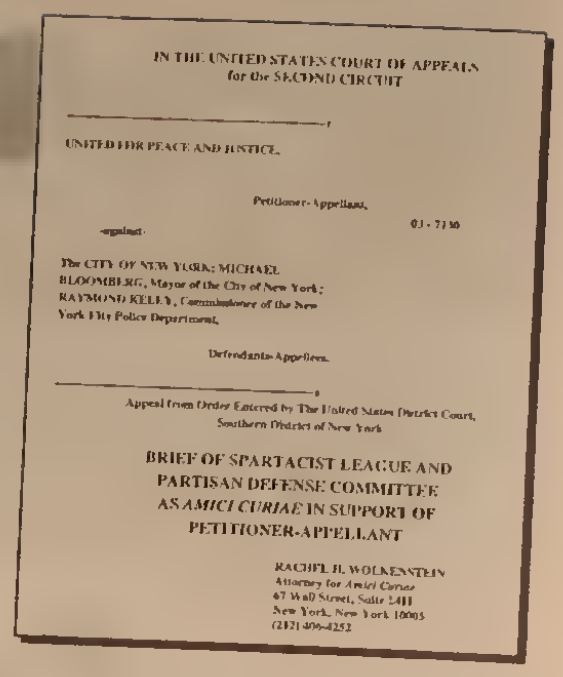
NY Times

Spartacist

Left: Newark ghetto upheaval, 1967. During wave of ghetto explosions, Spartacists fought for militant defense of inner cities, sought to mobilize working-class solidarity.

Amici Curiae Brief Filed

SL, PDC Protest Big Apple Police State



IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
for the SECOND CIRCUIT

UNITED FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE,

Petitioner-Appellant,

-against-

03-7130

The CITY OF NEW YORK; MICHAEL BLOOMBERG, Mayor of the City of New York; RAYMOND KELLY, Commissioner of the New York City Police Department,

Defendants-Appellees.

Appeal from Order Entered by The United States District Court, Southern District of New York

BRIEF OF SPARTACIST LEAGUE AND PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE AS *AMICI CURIAE* IN SUPPORT OF PETITIONER-APPELLANT

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We reprint below a slightly shortened *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief filed by the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York City on February 11. Submitted in support of the United for Peace and Justice coalition's appeal of a lower court decision upholding the NYPD's prohibition of a protest march past the United Nations on February 15, our brief predicted, "In criminalizing any march that day, the government is preparing an outright provocation virtually guaranteeing that not a few protesters will end up beaten and bloodied by the NYPD."

Those who made it to the rally site on February 15 were herded into tightly controlled police pens. Many who attempted to navigate the maze of police barricades to get to the protest were directed by cops into streets that were then sealed off. A videotape released by the demonstration organizers at a February 18 press conference shows mounted police backing horses into the crowds, cops pummelling demonstrators with nightsticks and penned-in protesters being pepper-sprayed. Some 300 protesters were arrested. The following day, cops in San Francisco arrested 46 protesters at an antiwar demonstration of 200,000 there.

As the PDC wrote in a February 15 letter protesting the NYC arrests: "With cops armed with machine guns roaming the city's streets and the subways, the courts and their armed police thugs were hoping to intimidate people into staying home today. But they *failed*. Over *500,000* demonstrators defied the cops and courts and came out to express their opposition to the slaughter the government is planning in Iraq, joining millions of antiwar protesters across the globe. We demand: *Free all the protesters now! Drop all the charges!*"

I. STATEMENT AND THE INTEREST OF *AMICI CURIAE*

The Spartacist League is a Marxist political organization with a history of almost forty years of activity in the United States, including running candidates for public office, holding classes and public forums on Marxist history and international and domestic politics, initiating and participating in protest demonstrations against government policies, and publishes a bi-weekly newspaper, *Workers Vanguard*, and a theoretical journal, *Spartacist*. The Spartacist League seeks to educate workers and their allies to build a workers party which fights for a socialist future.

The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the views of the Spartacist League.

The Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee file this motion and brief because they are tenacious defenders of their own legality and of those democratic rights won through bourgeois revolutions and revolutionary wars—the parliamentary partisans in the English Civil War, the U.S. Revolutionary War, the French Revolution and the American Civil War. *Amici* intend to participate in the protests against the Iraq war set for February 15, 2003 in New York City and support the Plaintiff-Appellant's appeal of the District Court's ruling upholding the City's abrogation of the democratic right to march in protest of the United States government's impending war against Iraq.

Amici have filed lawsuits as well as engaged in decades of political activity against prior government attempts to criminalize the expression of First Amendment rights by falsely targeting opponents of government policy as terrorists. The Spartacist League successfully sued the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1983 after the FBI changed its Guidelines, designating political organizations as "domestic security terrorist organizations." As a result of that lawsuit, the FBI withdrew its witchhunting "definition" of the Spartacist League. On February 9, 2002 *amici* initiated the first labor-centered united-front protest in the U.S. against the USA-Patriot Act and the government's anti-immigrant witchhunt, which has been conducted in the name of the "war against terrorism." *Amici* have long understood and propagandized that if political opponents of the government and government actions are put in the category of "terrorists," this defines them as "outlaws" of civil society, providing the state with a license to suspend democratic rights, criminalize political activity, and ultimately to engage in legalized murder. It was the fate of the Black Panther Party (BPP) to be deemed a "terrorist" organization by the FBI, and it was subjected to a government COINTELPRO campaign of harassment, surveillance and prosecution; government agents killed some 38 members of the BPP.

Amici Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee file this brief in support of the right of opponents of the United States' impending war on Iraq to march in protest of government policies. As the United States government prepares to launch an imperialist war of plunder against Iraq in the name of "freedom," the District Court below banned not only the projected march that would pass by the United Nations, but effectively endorsed the New York City Police Department's right to ban any protest march at any time in the streets of Manhattan. The Court asserted that it "will not second guess or substitute its judgment for that of the NYPD," thereby leaving the Police Department as the arbiter of democratic rights, including the fundamental First Amendment rights of speech and assembly, and criminalizing protest against the government.

This controversy over the right to march in opposition to the government's impending war against Iraq arises in the context of a wholesale government assault against democratic rights following the September 11, 2001 murderous attacks on the World Trade Center. The Bush administration with bipartisan support has since engaged in a so-called preventative and pre-emptive global "war against terrorism." From the USA-Patriot Act to new FBI Guidelines to the proposed "Domestic Security Enhancement Act," the government is engaged in a wholesale evisceration of democratic rights, including granting to itself the authority to detain terrorist suspects or potential material witnesses indefinitely, spy on individuals not suspected of committing crimes and use secret "evidence" and deny terrorist suspects legal counsel. Concomitantly, the government has relegated to itself the sole and legally unchallengeable right to indefinitely imprison U.S. citizens, without counsel and without judicial hearing or review. Internationally, the U.S. has kidnapped foreign nationals suspected of terrorism, imprisoned suspects indefinitely and authorized assassinations, overriding international conventions and its own longstanding ban on assassinations.

The District Court's ruling upholding the City's ban on the protest march is a frontal assault on the First Amendment right of speech and assembly and an ominous escalation in the government's crackdown on the rights of the population in the name of the "war on terror." The federal government itself has intervened and in an extraordinary move declared in the District Court that it would take legal action if the Court ruled allowing the march.

One has only to look at the photo of police at Times Square armed with semi or perhaps fully automatic rifles which appeared on the front page of the February 11 *New York Times* and the referenced article, "Administration Gives Advice on How to Prepare for a Terrorist Attack," for a vivid picture of how New York City is being turned into an armed camp, while government officials brazenly admit there is no evidence of an "imminent threat." This is a concretization of the fact that the government's "war on terror" is a war on the populace, focused primarily on immigrants, the labor movement and minorities—and anyone who protests government policies.

The "war on terror" began domestically with a round-up and imprisonment of immigrants of Near Eastern and South Asian descent. Then it was declared that a citizen determined to be an "enemy combatant" could be stripped of fundamental constitutional rights including the right to counsel and a trial and be effectively disappeared. The latest plan, contained in the expansion of the USA-Patriot Act, is to strip citizenship from anyone the government deems to be "aiding terrorists."

As popular opposition to the impending war against Iraq mounts, the government isn't stopping there. When the longshoremen's union on the West Coast was locked in a showdown with union-busting shipping bosses, the government intervened to threaten that any strike action by the workers would be a threat to "national security" and then brought down the Taft-Hartley law effectively against the union. When New York transit workers voted to go on strike, the media screamed that transit workers were launching a "jihad" and the strikebreaking Taylor Law was invoked. Firefighters who lost over 300 of their comrades trying to save people in the World Trade Center are declared a "clear and present danger to the United States" in a letter signed by Republican House majority leader Tom DeLay because they are unionized.

In the aftermath of the destruction of the Soviet Union and capitalist restoration, the United States

Andy Stern/Indymedia

New York City, February 15: As hundreds of thousands turned out despite ban on antiwar march, cops attacked protesters, arresting some 300.

Lina Pallotta/Indymedia

Transit workers at NYC protest.

government has asserted itself as the unquestionable supreme military power in the world. To carry out its imperial designs abroad, now concentrated on waging war against Iraq, the government needs class and social peace at home. In order to accomplish these ends it is attempting to regiment the population through an ideological "national unity" crusade and war propaganda. Seizing on the criminal attack against the World Trade Center, which killed thousands of innocent civilians, the government launched this "war against terror," which has led to smearing all government opponents and actions in opposition to government policy as threats to national security and criminalizing dissent.

Pursuant to Rule 29 of the Rules of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals *amici curiae* have concurrently filed a motion for leave of this Court for permission to submit this brief.

II. LEGAL ARGUMENT

A. The Primacy of First Amendment Rights

The First Amendment rights are intertwined and indivisible; and in class society, reversible. The First Amendment is a unified totality, the "text is indeed both general and absolute. In one sentence it separates church and state and guarantees free opinion." (See Mitchell Franklin, "Infamy and Constitutional Civil Liberties," *Lawyers Guild Review*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, p. 3 (1954).) The First Amendment is the "keystone of our Government,... the freedoms it guarantees provide the best insurance against destruction against all freedom," stated Mr. Justice Black, dissenting in *Dennis v. United States*, 341 U.S. 494, 580 (1951). The First Amendment is unified in its various clauses by the central liberty of freedom of the individual in matter of thought and conscience whether the concerns are political, religious or social. The legal force of the First Amendment applied only to the federal government until the defeat of slavery on the battlefields of the Civil War provided the legal basis for a national American state. Legally this was codified in the Reconstruction Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, subordinating the state governments to these democratic principles. (See *Gitlow v. New York*, 268 U.S. 652 (1925), *Cantwell v. Connecticut*, 310 U.S. 296 (1940).)

As Marxists, *amici curiae* recognize that the contraction of constitutionally protected rights is rooted in the class nature of the capitalist state. Harold Laski explains in his treatise, *The State in Theory and Practice* (1935):

> "... how accidental was the union of capitalism with democracy. It was the outcome, not of an essential harmony of inner principle, but of that epoch in economic evolution when capitalism was in its phase of expansion. It had conferred political power upon the masses; but it was upon the saving condition that political power should not be utilized to cut at the root of capitalist postulates. It would offer social reforms so long as these did not jeopardize the essential relations of the capitalist system. When they did as occurred in the post-war [World War I] years, the contradiction between capitalism and democracy became the essential institutional feature of Western civilization."

Constitutional history demonstrates that particularly when the populace is being prepared for war, the protections of the First Amendment are denied to the populace. The Bill of Rights was less than a decade old in 1798 when war hysteria prompted the Federalist-dominated United States Congress to enact the Alien and Sedition Acts. Constitutional challenges to the Acts were generally precluded in the federal courts. During World War I,

Ligato/Philadelphia Bulletin

1970: During FBI's murderous COINTELPRO campaign, Philadelphia cops dragged Black Panthers onto the street, forced them to strip and searched them at gunpoint.

the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 were passed and then upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Schenck v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47 (1919). In 1940 Congress, concerned with the increased possibility of the United States entering into World War II, passed the Alien Registration Act (better known as the Smith Act). The first to be prosecuted for their opposition to the impending interimperialist war were the Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party. The convictions for conspiring to overthrow the government by force and violence were affirmed by the Court of Appeals, *Dunne v. United States*, 138 F.2d 137; and the Supreme Court refused review, 320 U.S. 370 (1943). The internment of American citizens of Japanese descent during World War II, *Korematsu v. United States*, 320 U.S. 214 (1944) is a notorious example of trampling on democratic rights of citizens during wartime. Post-World War II, during the McCarthy anti-communist witchhunts, members of the Communist Party were convicted under the Smith Act, *Dennis v. United States*, 341 U.S. (1951).

The attacks on the First Amendment and on the rights of citizenship are reflections of the tendency toward state bonapartism, part and parcel of the drive toward war. The U.S. imperialist government wants the capacity to conduct its wars and military adventures as well as deal with the threat of class or social struggle at home without the encumbrances of Congressional approval, judicial oversight, or even the theoretical nod toward the democratic expression of the populace. In the current, post-September 11 "war against terrorism" period, as the U.S. government prepares for war against Iraq, the evisceration of First Amendment rights proceeds at a rapid pace. A core component of this diminution of democratic rights is the move toward unfettered power by the executive branch, a move toward state bonapartism. Such a move toward a police state relies on a compliant judiciary.

B. The District Court's Refusal to Grant Plaintiffs a Preliminary Injunction Violates Plaintiffs' First Amendment Rights and Constitutes Irreparable Injury

The Federal District Court ruling not only denied the application by the United for Peace and Justice coalition to march by the United Nations but also effectively endorsed the NYPD's right to ban *any* protest march at any time in the streets of Manhattan. The court ruling baldly stated that "The Court will not second guess or substitute its judgment for that of the NYPD." The linchpin of the Court's decision is the full acquiescence to the rationale by the NYPD representative: "The City's concerns with respect to crowd control are exacerbated by the added security concerns since September 11, 2001. The nation and the City are currently at the second highest security alert, a fact that the NYPD must take into account in determining the level of risk. The police can more effectively monitor crowds for terror threats at stationary rallies than they can crowds moving in a procession."

With war imminent and popular opposition continuing to mount, *the government is sending a message that those who protest against the war are potential terrorists and therefore antiwar protest can be deemed criminal.*

In explaining why marching rights given to organizers of "cultural events" like the St. Patrick's Day Parade are off-limits to antiwar protesters, the Court below explicitly terror-baited the planned demonstration, dismissing some 360 organizations as just so much rabble, stating "the Court finds that the heightened security concerns posed by an unorganized, large scale march threaten the City's interest in maintaining public safety." The Court further declared that the march would be "simply too large for the NYPD to adequately secure the safety of United Nations Headquarters" and endorsed the testimony of a top NYPD official that "if somebody in the group had a device, I don't know how we would be able to stop it with that amount of people." The presumption is an equation of antiwar protests with a nest of terrorists....

With well over 100,000 likely to turn out in New York City on February 15, the NYPD intends to herd the protesters into a series of tightly controlled pens. Based on the newspaper reports on the "preparations against terrorist attack" taking place in New York City, the protesters will be placed under armed guard by the NYPD, with little or no intercourse between the various police pens. This will not only have the effect of chilling and intimidating the protest, but will create chaos and disorder. In criminalizing any march that day, the government is preparing an outright provocation virtually guaranteeing that not a few protesters will end up beaten and bloodied by the NYPD.

In bowing to the judgment of the NYPD the Court below has relegated to the police the role of sole arbiters of the exercise of elementary and fundamental constitutional rights. This is consonant with the rationale of a police state; consonant with a growing body of judicial decisions which adopt the government's unsupported allegations in matters they deem to be "national security," ignoring the rights of citizens and non-citizens alike.

Plaintiff-Appellant is entitled to a preliminary injunction enjoining Defendants-Appellees from depriving the United for Peace and Justice coalition and all those who join them the right to march in protest against the impending war against Iraq....

CONCLUSION

The fundamental proposition of the First Amendment is to constitutionally safeguard free speech. There is no more urgent time to do so than now. The NYPD ban against this political protest march constitutes an intimidation tactic by the government against those who would demonstrate their opposition to government policies. The alternative presented by the City—putting tens of thousands of people into tightly controlled pens surrounded by heavily armed police—is a recipe for police attacks and violence against the antiwar protesters. The District Court decision acquiescing to the NYPD ban of the February 15 march on the grounds that it is a security and "terror" threat is an open declaration that any opposition to the United States government's war moves can be criminalized as potential "terrorism." It must be reversed.

Respectfully submitted,
RACHEL H. WOLKENSTEIN

Dated: New York, New York
February 11, 2003

"War on Terror" Witchhunt Against Palestinian Activists

Free Professor Sami Al-Arian!

On February 20, U.S. attorney general John Ashcroft announced the indictment of Professor Sami Al-Arian and seven others on racketeering conspiracy charges. According to the Feds, Al-Arian, a Kuwaiti-born Palestinian who had been wiretapped for nearly a decade, is now reputed to be the North American leader of the fundamentalist Islamic Jihad. He and three others residing in the U.S. were arrested. In a 24 February letter to the Justice Department, the Partisan Defense Committee demanded that all charges against Sami Al-Arian and the others be dropped and that they be immediately released. The letter stated, "Dr. Al-Arian has been targeted solely because he is an Islamic scholar and is outspoken in his defense of the Palestinian people against marauding Zionist terror.... This is a thought-crime prosecution pure and simple."

This is the culmination of a long state vendetta against Al-Arian and his family. Last summer, a media-abetted campaign of vilification led to death threats and the loss of his tenured position at the University of South Florida. One day after his firing, Al-Arian's brother-in-law, Mazen Al-Najjar, was deported to Lebanon on the pretext of overstaying his visa. In 1997, Al-Najjar had been rounded up by the INS and held on secret evidence for three and a half years under the 1996 "Anti-Terrorism Act" signed into law by Democratic president Clinton.

Al-Najjar's struggle against the Kafkaesque law won widespread support and international publicity, with Amnesty International declaring him a political prisoner. Former CIA head James Woolsey testified before the Senate for the law's repeal. In the summer of 2001, the "Secret Evidence Repeal Act" sponsored by Congressmen David Bonior, John Conyers and Tom Campbell—and supported by Bush during the 2000 presidential campaign—was near passage, only to fall victim to the anti-Arab witchhunt ushered in by the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

Ironically, Al-Arian was instrumental in turning out Muslim support for Bush in the 2000 election, possibly providing the margin of victory in the key state of Florida. The following June, Al-Arian was one of the members of the American Muslim Council invited to the White House to be briefed on the administration's "faith-based initiatives." A week later his son, an intern for Congressman Bonior, was part of a delegation of Muslims to the White House but was ejected from the grounds by Secret Service agents, prompting a walkout by the others.

The indictment of Dr. Al-Arian marks a watershed in the obliteration of protections under the Fourth Amendment. The sole "evidence" against him are wiretaps obtained under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). That law formally limited the use of wiretaps to "gathering intelligence," barring them from being used as the basis for prosecution since the Fourth Amendment prohibits search or seizure without probable cause that a crime is being committed. But last November, the secret FISA appeals court ruled that the newly passed USA-Patriot Act erased any such restrictions. The indictment of Dr. Al-Arian, the first since the FISA appeals court ruling, is a dangerous precedent which would allow the government to tap the phones or break into the houses or offices of any one of us. It must not go unchallenged!

Columbine...

(continued from page 3)

into prison. At the same time, anti-black racism is wielded by the exploiters to weaken and divide the working class as a whole. What the capitalists fear above all is the spectre of an aroused, class-conscious, multiracial working class, since labor has the objective self-interest and power to overthrow the capitalist system.

Bowling for Columbine attempts to address the origins of black oppression in a witty cartoon history of the U.S. by one of the creators of *South Park* where guns are the weapons of paranoid white folks, from Pilgrims fleeing the British crown to settlers killing Indians they fear, to slaveholders surrounded by blacks in the antebellum South. But it was the ***arming*** of 200,000 ex-slaves and free black men from the North fighting with the Union Army that helped turn the tide in the Civil War—the Second American Revolution—and smash chattel slavery.

Library of Congress

Black troops in Union Army helped turn tide in war to defeat Southern slavocracy.

Yet soon after, the promise of black freedom was betrayed by the Northern capitalists, the radical reforms of Reconstruction were reversed, and the reactionary institution of official Jim Crow segregation triumphed. Disenfranchised blacks were stalked by KKK terror and lynchings. Today, the barbaric death penalty is the Jim Crow lynch rope made legal. As communists, we fight for a third American Revolution to finish the Civil War, for a socialist revolution that would smash the racist system of capitalism. Our aim is to create a society which will lay the material basis for full social and political equality for blacks. Such a revolution can only be led by a multiracial vanguard party capable of linking the struggles of the black ghetto masses with the social power of labor.

S. Pikula

Hospital in Belgrade, Serbia, bombed by NATO in 1999 war under Democratic president Clinton. Moore notes that Columbine massacre occurred during U.S. bombing campaign.

As the movie's history cartoon shows, the racist rulers have always been petrified of black militancy and—just like the former slaveholders—tremble with fright at the image of blacks with guns. In the 1950s, Robert F. Williams was one of the many black ex-Marines who came home to American discrimination and fought back by organizing black self-defense squads against KKK and police terror. Because he was a heroic black fighter championing the right to bear arms, Williams was framed up by the FBI and driven into exile in Cuba.

Later, black soldiers returning from Vietnam, disillusioned by the dead-end pacifism of the liberal civil rights leaders, also saw the need to be armed in order to fight racist repression. Many ended up joining the Black Panther Party, which although far from Marxist politics, rejected the electoral, pro-Democratic Party mainstream road of the civil rights movement and hoped to achieve black freedom through revolutionary struggle at home. The ruling class responded with murderous terror under the FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO), which killed and jailed scores of Panthers. One former Black Panther is the well-known award-winning journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who, as an advocate of black self-defense, was blatantly framed up by the state, railroaded to death row, and is currently facing his twenty-first year in prison. The prosecutor in his "trial" argued on political grounds that he be put to death, citing Jamal's having quoted Mao Zedong's truism that "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."

Anti-black racism has historically been used by the ruling class to keep the working class divided. Today, with the country plunging deeper and deeper into recession, the bourgeoisie has declared an all-out war against the black and working poor through massive unemployment, deteriorating schools, and the stripping away of social services. Meanwhile, as industry after industry is milked dry by profit-hungry capitalists, for every job lost on the assembly line a new place in the prison system is created. In the U.S., where more people are behind bars than anywhere else in the world, nearly one-third of all black males in their 20s are either in prison, on parole or probation.

One of the biggest attacks on black people in the recent decade has been the destruction of the welfare system, painted vividly in one of the most powerful scenes of *Bowling for Columbine*. The scene begins when Moore returns to his hometown of Flint, Michigan, and discovers another school shooting: this time, a six-year-old girl has been killed by a classmate. The movie goes on to tell the real story of a single black mother who is forced to slave in "workfare" programs in order to work off her welfare check and must work two jobs, commuting 80 miles a day and leaving little time for her to spend with her kid. Evicted from her home and still unable to pay rent, she is forced to move in with a relative. It is at that house where her six-year-old son finds his uncle's gun—the gun which was taken to school and which was used in the tragic shooting. And, since the victim was white and he is black, there is an uproar calling to hang the six-year-old boy.

Above all this scene shows the effects of the brutal "workfare" program, pushed forward during the Democratic Clinton administration to mark "the end of welfare as we know it." In 2002, more and more destitute women and children were simply dumped off welfare, job or not, for exceeding the five-year lifetime "drop deadline." Workfare programs, promoted as the road to permanent employment, leave the destitute with only two options: slave-labor "jobs" or a life on the streets. As poverty increases, single mothers suffer tremendously from deadly cut-offs in housing and medical aid. And working-class black women—triply oppressed by their class, race and sex—are especially hard hit along with their children. As we wrote in "Genocide U.S.A." (*WV* No. 463, 21 October 1988):

> "[Workfare] is not welfare reform, it's a plan to turn the ghettos into vast cemeteries—because *there are no jobs to get*. The aim of this legislation is to see to it that layers of the minority population *die*, because this decrepit capitalist system no longer needs them."

The Capitalist State: Worst Enemy of the Oppressed

The attacks on welfare are part of a broader reactionary rollback of gains that were won during the rise of industrial unions in the 1930s and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. These important gains were not bestowed from above by a benevolent government but won through ***mass integrated social struggle***. Yet a lot of radical youth today believe that capitalism and its politicians can ultimately be pressured to be more "socially conscious." Disillusioned with the Democrats, some turn to Ralph Nader's Green Party which poses as a "left" alternative third party through its criticisms of "corporate greed" and the death penalty. Many fans of Michael Moore—himself an active supporter of Nader and the Green Party—share the ideology that change in society can be achieved through electoral pressure politics.

Moore is honest—he doesn't claim to be a Marxist. But as Marxists we know that the capitalist state is the executive committee of the ruling class, made up of the police, courts, military and prison system—the special armed bodies of men whose *job* it is to protect capitalist property from the many whose blood and sweat make the profits for the few. The only way to make real social gains permanent and irreversible is ***not*** by voting for a different bourgeois politician but by mobilizing the working class to take state power in its own name, in the interests of all the working masses and oppressed.

While *Bowling for Columbine* is biting testimony to the state of the violent chaos of modern American capitalism, the biggest problem is what Moore appears to advocate as a solution: gun control legislation. The movie is literally—emotions aside—***disarming***. The intent of gun-control legislation is not to "fight crime," but to ensure that ***only*** the capitalist state has access to arms. It leaves guns in the hands of the cops, criminals and crazies (including fascists), while workers, blacks, minorities and the poor are left defenseless. If some of the women and men who work at abortion clinics were armed, knowledge of that fact might put the fear of god into the biblethumping "right to life" thugs. Likewise, the criminal hijackers from the September 11th World Trade Center attack might have been stopped dead had anyone had a gun, but none did. We Marxists uphold the right to self-defense from the standpoint of defending the interests of the workers and oppressed against the oppressors.

Gun Control Kills Blacks

Bowling for Columbine's pro-gun-control "corporate responsibility" campaign comes when Moore demands that Kmart take their handgun and assault rifle ammunition off its shelves. He does this after discovering that two victims from the Columbine massacre were crippled by bullets, still lodged in their bodies, that were purchased at Kmart. Kmart caves in, phases out its ammo, and Moore is jubilant. The British Socialist Workers Party (SWP)—a reformist outfit formerly allied with the American International Socialist Organization and which still shares the same fundamental politics—wrote in a review of the movie that this scene "shows the power of protest" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 23 November 2002). Such enthusiasm over this action is a not-so-back-handed endorsement of gun control. While pretending to be on the side of the "underdogs" in one big, bad, profit-gouging world, the "socialist"

Sotomayor/NY Times

In wake of Columbine massacre, U.S. high school students face heightened repression, security guards and metal detectors.

SWP is standing *against* the right of working people and the poor to defend themselves.

What would have happened had the striking miners in Ludlow, Colorado in 1914 not had guns? After the state militia massacred several striking miners and their families, some 1,000 workers—armed by the United Mine Workers—fought back bullet for bullet, to the bosses' horror, for ten days. But *Bowling for Columbine* seems to skip every chapter in U.S. history in which the oppressed took up arms to battle their oppressors. A quick montage in the movie shows the U.S. carpet-bombing Vietnam, but the movie shows nothing of the heroic struggle of the *armed* Vietnamese workers and peasants who in the course of a social revolution defeated on the battlefield the mightiest imperialist power in the world. In America it was the revolutionary struggle against Britain which produced the principle of the "right to keep and bear arms," codified in the Second Amendment to the Constitution. And every attempt to unravel it has been a calculated counterrevolutionary act on the part of an imperialist ruling class.

In fact, right now the bourgeoisie would love to see the population disarmed in order to better carry out its "war on terror" domestically and abroad. The whole history of gun control is the story of the bourgeoisie trying to quell any resistance to their rule, particularly in periods of social struggle. In 1934, the U.S. government banned automatic weapons when workers entered into a massive strike wave in the midst of the Great Depression. Three decades later in the 1960s, New York City passed a law against carrying "longarms" in public specifically to disarm Malcolm X. And when the ruling class saw the Black Panthers arming themselves, the federal gun control act was pushed forward to ward off black self-defense against racist police. Gun restrictions ensure only that racist armed cops have free rein in the ghettos and barrios against a vulnerable, unarmed population. Indeed, this is what is meant when we say that gun control *kills* blacks.

So the question of gun control boils down to: do you trust the state to have the monopoly of weapons? Corporate bigwigs and editors-in-chief of bourgeois media outlets who preach gun control know that there will always be an armed man at hand for their protection, be it the hired hand of security guards or the police who protect *them* and their property. In the U.S., racist cop brutality against the oppressed is no aberration, but rather an American custom—in the words of 1960s black militant H. Rap Brown (to howls of ruling-class outrage), "Violence is as American as cherry pie."

Just recall the LAPD unleashing their version of "to serve and protect" on Rodney King in 1991, or the recent Oakland "Riders," police thugs named after the murderous nightriders of the KKK. And the list of victims is long: Tyisha Miller, a 19-year-old black woman shot to death by the police in the middle of an epileptic seizure; Amadou Diallo, an African immigrant gunned down in a hail of 41 bullets by the NYPD on his doorstep; Patrick Dorismond, a 26-year-old black father blown away by an undercover narc while talking on his cell phone; Timothy Thomas, chased into an alley and gunned down by Cincinnati cops under the pretext of petty misdemeanors, to name a few. And the list increases every day.

Soviet Writer

Petrograd, 1917: Red Guards with banner, "Long Live the Universal Arming of the People and the Workers First of All."

Imperialist War or Socialist Revolution

Obviously, disarming the cops is *not* on the agenda of the gun-control junkies. Better yet, how about disarming the Pentagon? Such a feat requires a *social revolution*, in which the ruling class is expropriated and its state shattered.

In one ironic scene in *Bowling*, an executive of Lockheed Martin, the largest producer of weapons of mass destruction, stands in front of the plant's ballistic missiles while commenting how Columbine might have been prevented with a little "anger management." Just one of these missiles can carry between 12 to 24 warheads, each warhead with up to eight times the explosive power of the A-bomb dropped on Hiroshima during the Second World War. It's not a question of immoral sources of profit for greedy war-industry corporations, but of the fundamentally imperialist character of capitalism in its decay. The U.S. government, dead set on being the superpower of the world in the quest for markets and domination, spends hundreds of billions of dollars a year in its military budget and its nuclear weapons have the capacity to wipe out the world several times over.

But disarming the imperialist bourgeoisie clearly raises questions of *who* and *how*, questions Michael Moore cannot touch. It was the triumphant Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the first and only workers revolution in history, which ended the Russian capitalists' bloody participation in the interimperialist slaughter of World War I—the first blow of an international workers revolution that had the potential to end this capitalist horror for good. It is only the working class, the producers of the wealth of society, that is capable of putting an end to war for good by overthrowing the imperialist warmongers, taking power, and instituting an egalitarian socialist order.

If there is one thing *Bowling for Columbine* fancies about America, it's Canada. According to the movie, Canada has just as many guns per capita as the U.S. but has a far lower murder rate. Interviewing a local mayor in Canada who speaks about the need for health care, welfare and other social programs as the means to alleviate violence in society, Moore opines that this is a country with politicians who make sense. Behind this "kinder, gentler" facade—conditioned by the existence of a social-democratic party, albeit a right-wing variant—is the brutal reality of capitalist austerity attacks against the working class, poor and homeless and police terror against immigrants and minorities in Canada. If you want a taste of gun control Canadian style, look at the army of cops and troops that was unleashed against Mohawk Indians who took up arms to defend their land rights in 1990 in Oka, Quebec. In 1970, the English-chauvinist suppression of the national rights of the Québécois was enforced with the military occupation of Quebec, deploying army troops and tanks in the streets and rounding up hundreds of trade-union leaders, leftists and others who were thrown behind bars.

Reuters

Canadian cops brutalize demonstrator during Quebec anti-globalization protest, 2001.

Capitalist Canada's foreign policy is different from the U.S. not from any moral or social superiority but only because it has qualitatively less weight to throw around, acting instead as an appendage of U.S. capitalism. Here Canadian imperialism plays a useful role in providing the cover of "peacekeepers" for the brutal depredations of U.S. imperialism from the Near East to Iraq to Afghanistan. Behind Canada's "nice guy" mask are troops like those of the Canadian Airborne Regiment who systematically tortured and killed Somali teenagers during their "peacekeeping" murder mission in that country.

Bowling for Columbine's conclusion that America is simply too riddled with fear to have an armed citizenry is a statement of despair that only alibis the capitalist rulers' desire to obtain a complete monopoly of armed force. And so long as capitalism exists, its rule will be maintained by armed violence. Even though the period looks grim, social struggle could rapidly change the political climate. To reverse the erosion of social services, to oppose the U.S. rulers' wars of depredation and to defend civil liberties demands the mobilization of the multiracial working class.

There can be no end to unemployment, exploitation or racism without uprooting the entire capitalist order and replacing it with a planned, socialist economy capable of building a classless society. For a revolution to be won, the work of a conscious, organized vanguard party—like the Bolsheviks who led the Russian workers to power in 1917—must lead the working class in a fight against all forms of oppression, especially, in this country, the special oppression of black people. Of course, having guns is no magic talisman against the endemic violence of decaying capitalism. But, as stated in the Transitional Program by Trotsky: "The only disarmament which can avert or end war is the disarmament of the bourgeoisie by the workers. But to disarm the bourgeoisie the workers must arm themselves."■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BOSTON

Monday, 7 p.m.

March 3: **"War on Terror" Equals War on Immigrants, Blacks and Labor: The Marxist Understanding of the Capitalist State**

BU School of Education, Room 212
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

March 4: **Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! No Illusions in the Racist, Capitalist State and Its Courts!**

University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis, Room TBA
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

March 1: **The Fight Against Capitalist Counterrevolution In the USSR and Eastern Europe**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

March 4: **The Fight for Black Liberation: Key to the American Socialist Revolution**

Columbia University
306 Hamilton Hall
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

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Protests...

(continued from page 12)

drive to destroy the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe now adopt an "antiwar" posture that is little more than window-dressing for the national interests of their own capitalist ruling classes.

Anti-Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle at Home!

From San Francisco to London and Paris, the banners of our revolutionary internationalist contingents called for mobilizing the working class in struggle against their imperialist rulers at home. Protesting the deployment of the Irish Army in Shannon Airport to protect U.S. warplanes from antiwar protesters, a 13 February leaflet by the Spartacist Group Ireland declared: "What would be effective is strike action by airport workers and the rest of the Irish workers movement against the use of Shannon Airport for the transport of war matériel and troops."

Such action had already been taken by 15 Scottish railway drivers who refused to transport munitions to a NATO weapons depot. More recently in Italy, transport unions, together with antiwar activists, blocked the railway line being used to transport military equipment to Camp Darby (see article, page 1). In Australia, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union has announced that building workers in Sydney will walk off the job immediately upon the outbreak of war. Leaders of five major unions in Britain have also warned of possible industrial action when war breaks out.

But to mount a genuine class-struggle opposition to this imperialist war requires a program of uncompromising proletarian independence from one's "own" capitalist rulers. And such is decidedly not the policy of even those trade-union leaders who are now calling for labor action. Rather, their invocations of proletarian struggle are aimed simply at effecting a parliamentary "regime change" in their own countries, keeping the working class chained to the rule of the capitalist exploiters in its social-democratic face.

This is manifest in the case of Italy's Rifondazione Comunista (RC), which talks of a general strike against the war while making clear in a statement issued after the February 15 protests that RC's real purpose is to again play a role in a "left" parliamentary coalition government, as it did in the mid '90s. RC declares: "Let the arguments for peace and democracy win in parliament as they have already won in the country at large. Take the responsibility to represent the will of the majority of Italian citizens. Restore a positive role and social dignity to our country."

Striking an orthodox posture, an article in *Proposta* (January 2003), newspaper of the centrist outfit headed by Franco Grisolia, declares that the task of the working class "is to defend Iraq against the imperialist slaughter" and that "the task of the communists was and is to counterpose to imperialist war class war and a revolutionary perspective—the only way to put an end to all war, as it is the only way to stop the social system, capitalism, which breeds war." Left unsaid anywhere in the article is the need for the instrumentality to carry out such a perspective, a revolutionary party. This is hardly surprising considering that Proposta is, and has long been, firmly ensconced as the loyal opposition in RC. As Lenin wrote in *Socialism and War* in the crucible of World War I: "Unity with the opportunists actually means subordinating the working class to their 'own' national bourgeoisie...it means splitting the revolutionary proletariat of all countries."

Similarly in Britain, the reformist and centrist left provides cover for the social-chauvinism and parliamentarism of the trade-union tops and Labourite social democrats. The outpouring of up to two million people in London on February 15 is a stunning measure of the growing hatred for "New Labour" prime minister Tony Blair, more popularly known as "Bush's poodle" for his loyal service to U.S. imperialism. Left-talking trade-union leaders, dubbed the "awkward squad," who are behind the calls for labor action were prominent speakers from the platform. But this massive mobilization is now being seized upon to channel growing opposition to the Labour Party into...the Labour Party!

Espartaco

Mexico City, February 15: Grupo Espartaquista contingent carries sign (at right) reading: "Unconditional Military Defense of North Korea! For Its Right to Have Nuclear Weapons!"

In the aftermath of the February 15 demonstration, Labour Against the War, the creature of "left" Labour MPs Jeremy Corbyn and George Galloway, initiated a mass campaign urging unionists, antiwar activists and others to rejoin the Labour Party and "return a Labour government that uses diplomacy and development rather than bombs in the search for conflict resolution." Mick Rix, head of the ASLEF rail workers union, got thunderous applause from the crowd on February 15 when he invoked the action taken by members of his union in refusing to transport armaments in Scotland. But like Corbyn, Rix urges "all trade unionists to join the Labour Party and fight for policies that put peace and our public services first."

These Labour "lefts" all hark back to "real Labour." Just what are they referring to? The Labour Party which joined in a coalition with Winston Churchill's Tories to pursue the aims of British imperialism during World War II, including the relentless subjugation of colonial India? The post-World War II government of Clement Atlee, which marshaled British troops and bombers for the slaughter of over three million Koreans during the Korean War? The government of Harold Wilson, which dispatched British troops to Northern Ireland in 1969? The government of James Callaghan, which imposed the wage-slashing Social Contract on the combative British unions in the late 1970s and enforced such racist immigration policies as virginity tests for Asian women arriving in Britain?

The Labour Party has always served the interests of British imperialism against the working class at home and the working people and oppressed abroad. The present massive discontent in the ranks of the unions with the Blair government provides a real opening toward breaking the proletarian ranks of the Labour Party away from its pro-capitalist leaders (not just Blair but also the so-called Labour "lefts"), a strategic task in forging a proletarian revolutionary party in Britain.

Within days of the antiwar protests, the reformist and centrist left went into overdrive in a campaign to "Drive Blair Out!" as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) declared in a *Socialist Worker* (22 February) banner headline. Providing one of the more chemically pure statements of what's behind the bureaucrats' call for "labor action," an article titled: "We Can Get Regime Change in Britain" says, "Now we have to cause such turmoil that Blair is forced from office." In effect, this is a call to replace Blair with his chancellor of the exchequer (treasury secretary), Gordon Brown, his chief rival in the Cabinet.

The right centrists of Workers Power give a more militant gloss to the idea of "regime change." This was spelled out in an article titled "Break with Blair—We Need a New Workers' Party": "The question of breaking from Labour—over both the war on Iraq and the war on the unions—is now concretely posed" (*Workers Power*, December 2002). They even allow that "it needs to be a revolutionary party." But falling back on the excuse that "many workers don't yet agree with the need for revolution," they argue that "in the best case scenario" a new workers party needs to be built by the very left-talking bureaucrats and Labour MPs who are now campaigning to "reclaim" the Labour Party!

As our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain wrote in the front-page article "Fight British Imperialism Through Class Struggle at Home!" in the current *Workers Hammer* (Winter 2002-2003), many hundreds of which were sold at the protests in London and Glasgow:

> "Today we fight to break the ideological chains that bind the working people, minorities and radicalized youth to the Old Labour programme of pressuring decaying British imperialism. Proletarian revolutionary opposition to war, in a conscious way, requires a split from the opportunist currents in the workers movement. The central task remains the construction of a multiethnic revolutionary workers party modelled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the October Revolution in Russia."

For Proletarian Revolutionary Internationalism!

The call for the February 15 demonstrations emerged from the European Social Forum in Italy last fall. Preceding that event, the bulk of European fake socialists—RC, the LCR, the SWP and Workers Power—co-signed a declaration appealing to the European bourgeois rulers to oppose American imperialism. It read:

> "Those who show solidarity with the people of Iraq have no hearing in the White House. But we do have the chance to influence European governments—many of whom have opposed the war. We call on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans."

Far from advancing a struggle for "peace," these putative leftists promote the resurgent nationalism and chauvinism in Europe that paves the way for a future interimperialist war.

In Germany, the organizers of the Berlin protest openly demanded that the government of Social Democratic (SPD) chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Green foreign minister Joschka Fischer "use all political means to oppose this war." It certainly is a topsy-turvy world when the Fourth Reich of German imperialism is being portrayed as a major force for "peace." As our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD) wrote in the mobilizing leaflet for their contingent: "The German bourgeoisie is attempting to merge the opposition to war in the population—a result of Germany losing two imperialist world wars and an expression of mistrust in the SPD/Green

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Defend Iraq Against U.S. and Allied Imperialist Attack!
Down With UN Starvation Blockade!
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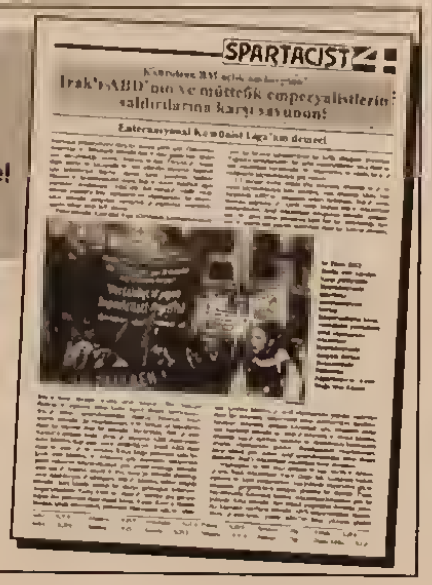
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Class-Struggle Protest Against War on Iraq

Scottish Railway Drivers Refuse to Transport Armaments

The following article by the Spartacist League/Britain is reprinted from Workers Hammer *No. 183 (Winter 2003).*

In early January, in a dramatic political action against the threatened war on Iraq, two rail workers in Motherwell, members of the union ASLEF, halted a freight train

WORKERS HAMMER

loaded with tanks and munitions destined for the Gulf. When over a dozen more drivers, employed by the EWS freight company, also refused to move the cargo, Ministry of Defence officials were forced to transport it by road to its destination—the NATO munitions depot at Glen Douglas on Scotland's west coast—where it was eventually loaded onto the Ark Royal warship bound for the Gulf region.

As revolutionary socialists who stand for the military defence of Iraq in the impending war, we salute the courageous action of the Scottish railway workers. Their refusal to move the armaments points the way forward to the kind of class struggle that needs to be waged by workers here against the capitalist rulers and the Labour government in order to give content to the defence of semicolonial Iraq against the imperialist warmongers. To their credit, the local leadership of ASLEF have backed the workers involved. The drivers' action should have the full support of the union and of the entire working class. It follows similar recent working-class antiwar actions, such as that of Japanese dockworkers at Sasebo who in 2001 refused to load armaments and military supplies onto Japanese navy ships aiding the war on Afghanistan. During the 1999 U.S./Britain/NATO war against Serbia, Italian COBAS unions organised a one-million-strong political general strike against the war. Fiat workers, who today battle plant closings in Italy, organised a campaign of material aid—a campaign which all sections of the ICL actively supported—for their class brothers and sisters at the Yugoslav Zastava car plant, which had been bombed by the imperialists.

The Motherwell railway workers also stand in the tradition of Red Clydeside during World War I when Scottish engineering workers waged strikes that caused major disruption to the war effort. They defied the chauvinist war frenzy, and as today this meant defying Labour politicians and union officials. Leaders such as John MacLean refused to bow to the state and insisted on pursuing the class war during the imperialist war, and were jailed for this. Later, in May 1920 London dockers refused to load the ship SS *Jolly George* with weapons for war against the fledgling Soviet workers state. The "Hands off Russia" campaign achieved mass support among British workers who, like the working people of the whole world, were electrified by the Bolshevik October 1917 Revolution. The leaders of Red Clydeside, John MacLean and Willie Gallacher, were revolutionary syndicalists, who led militant strikes that challenged the capitalist system but could not overthrow it. From 1914 the Bolsheviks insisted on the need to split from the social-chauvinist Labourites, to build a revolutionary vanguard party. Indeed, Lenin wrote his pamphlet *"Left-Wing" Communism—An Infantile Disorder* to win leaders like Gallacher and MacLean to the Communist International. The Bolsheviks' perspective was that only workers revolution could end imperialist war. That's the perspective we uphold today.

In bringing the munitions trains to a grinding halt, the Motherwell ASLEF workers' action points the way forward, demonstrating the social power of the working class. It is the labour of workers that manufactures the armaments, that transports and loads them, and it is the working class that has the capacity to bring the whole capitalist economy to a grinding halt. There is much discontent in the British proletariat and more broadly throughout society, both with economic conditions and with the war. Concerted union action against the war is needed. Every successful strike, every workers mobilisation against the war plans, every reverse for the imperialists represents a set-back for their war drive and a blow struck in the interests of workers at home.

The fight against imperialist war is the fight against the capitalist system that breeds it. Today this means the international proletariat has a stake in defending Iraq, taking a side with it against U.S. and British imperialism. This perspective is bound up with a political struggle to win the proletariat to consciousness of the need to be truly independent of the capitalist order and to forge a Leninist party in counterposition to Labourite reformism.■

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government—with resurgent German nationalism reflecting the ambitions of the German capitalist rulers to compete with their U.S. and Japanese imperialist rivals over carving up the world's natural resources and to redivide their spheres of influence."

In his speech to the Berlin protest, Rolf Becker, an activist from the German public sector union in Hamburg, took the leaders of the DGB trade-union federation to task: "We must remind the DGB leadership that they unconditionally said yes to war against Yugoslavia from the first day on.... We ask the DGB leadership: Is the no today only a no as long as the government says no?" The SPD/Green government aided in the 1999 bombing of Serbia and deployed the Bundeswehr in the Balkans—the first significant German military force to be sent abroad since the Nazi era—and also sent troops as part of the imperialist occupation forces in Afghanistan. As the SpAD leaflet declared: "Schröder and Fischer are Balkan butchers! Bundeswehr out of the Balkans, Afghanistan and the Near East! Not a man, not a cent to this imperialist army!"

The left groups who now join the pacifist chorus of "give peace a chance" were singing a different tune during the U.S.-led NATO war against Serbia in 1999. Then it was "give war a chance," as they appealed to their imperialist rulers to bring "human rights" and "democracy" to the Balkans. The LCR in France and leading British SWP member Alex Callinicos signed a statement openly calling for imperialist military intervention in Kosovo. They merely objected to U.S. imperialism leading the charge and instead called for this to be carried out under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe or the United Nations. For its part, Workers Power and its League for a Revolutionary Communist International supported the Kosovo Albanian separatists who were then pawns of U.S. imperialism. Workers Power even co-sponsored a meeting with pro-NATO speakers from Bosnia and Kosovo and participated in a "Workers Aid to Kosovo" demonstration in London which was shot through with NATO flags and placards screaming, "NATO Just Do It."

In Australia, the Laborite left and trade-union bureaucrats campaigned for the intervention of Australian imperialist troops in East Timor in 1999. At the February 15 protest in Sydney, the Spartacist League/Australia, which opposed that intervention from the outset, carried a banner declaring: "Australian Military Get Out of the Persian Gulf, East Timor! Hands Off Indonesia! Defend Iraq Against US/UN/Australian Imperialist Attack!" In Britain, we prominently featured the call for British troops out of Northern Ireland, while the protest organizers prominently featured former Labour Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam—who deployed the British Army to occupy a Catholic area of Portadown in 1997—as a platform speaker. In Canada, our comrades raised the demand "Independence for Quebec!" and fought against the English-Canadian chauvinism of the NDP social democrats.

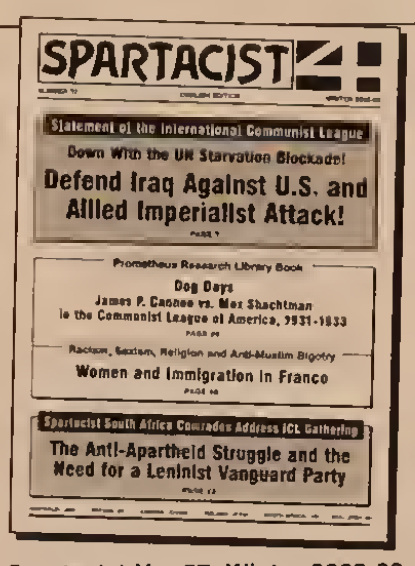
It is important that millions of people protested the war against Iraq. In New York City, despite a court order banning protesters from marching and with the city turned into a virtual police occupation zone under the Bush administration's "terrorism" alert, hundreds of thousands defiantly came out to show their opposition. In San Francisco, the SL/U.S., the Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Labor Black League for Social Defense organized the Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent under the slogans: "For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Down with the UN starvation blockade!"

Our 100-strong contingent was joined by a number of youth who were attracted by our signs and chants pointing to the need to break with the Democrats, the other capitalist party of war and racism, and for a revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system. The contingent stopped as we reached the entrance to the rally site, where our bright red flags with the internationalist symbol of hammer and four could be seen and our chants heard by all who passed by. This embarrassed the demonstration organizers in ANSWER, the vehicle of the Workers World Party (WWP) for class collaboration. The WWP was fearful of raising any demands that might alienate their bourgeois liberal coalition partners, who think that war with Iraq is not ***at the moment*** in the best interests of U.S. imperialism. ANSWER marshals unsuccessfully attempted to stop our chants and to isolate us from the other demonstrators by holding yellow "caution" tape in front of our banner and literature table. It is clear that these fake socialists want to suppress the views of revolutionaries while ensuring the presence of Democrat after Democrat on the official speaker's platform.

Would-be leftists internationally make much of their role in building the broad "unity" of the antiwar movement. But as James Burnham, a leader of the Workers Party, then the American Trotskyist organization, argued in his 1936 pamphlet "War and the Workers":

> "To suppose, therefore, that revolutionists can work out a common 'program against war' with non-revolutionists is a fatal illusion. Any organization based upon such a program is not only powerless to prevent war; in practice it acts to promote war, both because it serves in its own way to uphold the system that breeds war, and because it diverts the attention of its members from the real fight against war. There is only *one* program against war: the program *for* revolution—the program of the revolutionary party of the workers."

The ICL is dedicated to forging the world party of socialist revolution that can eradicate the scourge of capitalist imperialism around the globe.■



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Defend Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

the U.S. and Europe. At the same time, the working class and oppressed peoples the world over must defend the struggles of the Iraqi people against the American invaders.

The main focus of wrangling between the U.S. and France is over an additional UN resolution explicitly authorizing an immediate war. Such a resolution is particularly important to British prime minister Tony Blair, whose lapdog-like servility to Bush has provoked massive popular opposition, indeed revulsion, especially in his own ruling Labour Party and the trade-union movement. The Bush gang is hoping that France, Russia and China will abstain rather than exercise their veto power in the Security Council. But even American neocolonies like Mexico are balking at endorsing a U.S. war against Iraq.

For 12 years, the self-proclaimed "world's only superpower" has waged a one-sided war against this small, semi-colonial Near Eastern country. The 1991 Desert Slaughter campaign was accompanied by economic sanctions, both "legitimized" by UN resolutions, which have resulted in the deaths of a million and a half Iraqis from malnutrition and disease.

The "disarmament" of a relatively industrialized Third World country like Iraq means not only the slaughter of tens or hundreds of thousands of people but the continued devastation of industry and infrastructure. Chlorine for water purification and pumps for irrigation and sewage are among the wide range of items deemed by Washington to have military use and thus banned by the UN starvation blockade. As Dilip Hiro notes in his book *Iraq: In the Eye of the Storm* (2002): "Due to the broken-down pumps, the sewage spills over into rivers, the source of drinking water. And that leads to such illnesses as typhoid and dysentery, which reached epidemic proportions in 1997." Also banned as "dual use" items are seeds, pesticide, fertilizer and spare parts for farm machinery—even textbooks, writing paper and medical vaccines, the latter because they contain trace amounts of a potential chemical weapon.

Now Bush Jr. is intent on finishing the job begun by his father and continued by his Democratic successor Bill Clinton. Why? The usual answer, especially on the left, is that the U.S. wants to get control of Iraq's oil fields, which contain the second-largest petroleum reserves in the world after Saudi Arabia. "No Blood for Oil!" is a main slogan of the antiwar protests. But the U.S. could buy every barrel of oil produced by Iraq for a fraction of the projected cost—from $50 to $200 billion—of an invasion and occupation. The men who run Wall Street and Washington ***want Iraqi blood*** no less than they want Iraqi oil. They want to send a message, especially to their main imperialist rivals, that they have the military power and the will to use it regardless of what the rest of the world says or does. ***Defend Iroq ogoinst imperialist ottock! Down with the UN storvation blockade! All U.S./UN troops out of the Near East ond Persion Gulf region!***

Rifts in the Western "Alliance"

The recent political fireworks and mutual recriminations over Iraq signal deeply rooted and long-developing tensions between American imperialism and its main European capitalist rivals and erstwhile anti-Soviet Cold War allies. From the White House and Congress to TV and radio talk shows, the American ruling class is whipping up popular hostility especially toward France. Prominent politicians, Democrats as well as Republicans, are calling for punitive measures against French and German imports. Pentagon generals are talking about reducing U.S. troops stationed in Germany and transferring them to the now-friendlier climes of East Europe and the Balkans. The right-wing *New York Post* ran a doctored photo of the UN Security Council on its front page depicting the French and German delegates as weasels. In North Carolina, one restaurant has even changed french fries to "freedom fries"!

In an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (14 February), French ambassador Jean-David Levitte commented: "Reading the papers from both sides of the Atlantic, I sometimes wonder whether the impending war is not between France and the United States." In a sense, the impending U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq *is* directed at France or, more generally, at America's rivals in Europe and also Japan.

The massive outpouring of antiwar protest across Europe expressed the well-founded hatred and fear of American militarism among the working people, fear that the Pentagon's arsenal of death and destruction will be used not only against Third World countries like Iraq but at some point against Europe. That fear was heightened by the Pentagon's release last year of the "Nuclear Posture Review," which explicitly allows for a "pre-emptive" American nuclear attack and lists seven possible targets, including (for the first time) non-nuclear countries like Iraq. But if popular opposition to American militarism is not directed toward ***proletarian internationalism***, it will inevitably be directed toward strengthening the military power and global role of one's "own" capitalist state.

Thus a recent editorial in *Le Monde*, the premier mouthpiece of the French bourgeoisie, called for the European Union (EU) to "enlarge our defense policy which today is nationally limited" and an earlier piece even chastised Germany for being too pacifist. If today the German imperialists clothe themselves in more pacifistic garb than their American counterparts, it does not mean that they are inherently more "peaceful." It simply reflects the fact that at the present moment they lack the military means to challenge their American rivals. The European sections of the International Communist League intervened in the February 15 protests linking the defense of Iraq against the American-led attack with total opposition to the militarism of the European bourgeois states.

The rift between the United States and the major European capitalist states revealed by the Iraq crisis points toward the division of the capitalist world into rival imperialist blocs. As we wrote five years ago in the ICL "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

> "Increasingly mutually hostile imperialist powers and rival blocs must oppress the peoples of the former colonial world and those still under the yoke of colonial peonage, impoverish the world's masses, engage in continual wars for the maintenance and redivision of the world markets in order to prop up the falling rate of profit, and attempt to smash the revolutionary struggle of the workers wherever it breaks out. In its final frenzied effort to maintain its class rule, the bourgeoisie will not hesitate to plunge humanity into nuclear holocaust or dictatorial oppression of unprecedented ferocity."

America vs. Europe in the Post-Soviet World

NATO was formed in 1949 under tight American control as a military alliance with the West European capitalist states against the Soviet Union, which in defeating the Nazi German Wehrmacht had emerged from World War II as a military-industrial power second only to the United States. A few years later the U.S. formed a military alliance with Japan against the USSR, the People's Republic of China and North Korea in the Far East. With the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, the fundamental economic conflicts of interest among the major imperialist states, which had been somewhat constrained by the Cold War alliances, had to come to the fore.

In their own way the American ruling class understood this, too. Declaring their state to be the "world's only superpower," they were determined to keep it that way. In what has since been explicitly adopted as U.S. policy, a 1992 Pentagon document, leaked to the press, stated its intent to "set the nation's direction for the next century" (*New York Times*, 8 March 1992). The "first objective" was to "prevent the emergence of a new rival," precluding "the emergence of any potential future global competitor."

With the demise of the Soviet Union, the primary purpose of NATO for American imperialism has been to prevent European, centrally German, economic strength from being translated into an independent military force. Thus during the 1990s, the Clinton White House consistently sabotaged any independent EU policy—especially at the military level—toward the fratricidal wars in the Balkans ignited by capitalist counterrevolution and the resulting breakup of Yugoslavia. Two left-wing writers, James Petras and Steve Vieux, explained in this regard:

> "The disintegration of the Yugoslav confederation and the subsequent emergence of warring ethnic mini-states formed the background for the revitalization of NATO and the re-emergence of US hegemony in Europe. At the cost of tens of thousands of lives, the US blocked European peace initiatives in order to safeguard its political 'leadership' on the continent via NATO."
>
> —*New Left Review*, July/August 1996

Nonetheless, France and Germany not only supported but actively participated in the U.S./NATO attack on Bosnian Serbs in 1995 and the air war against Serbia in 1999. And Russia joined in the subsequent occupation of Kosovo under the NATO structure, with an American general in overall command.

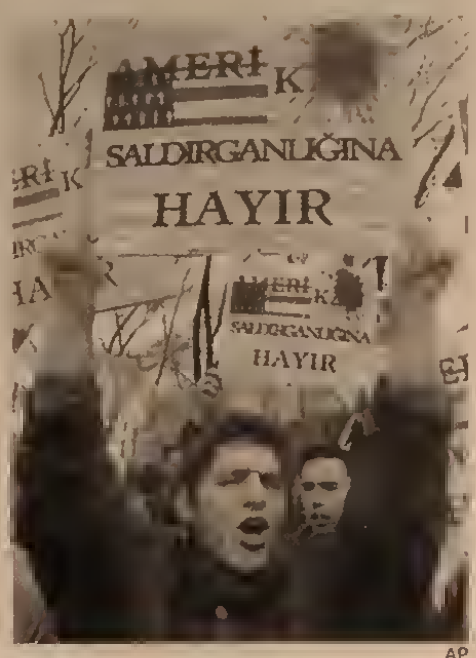
Reuters

Diplomatic wrangling among imperialist thieves: Pentagon chief Rumsfeld with German foreign minister Fischer.

France Talks the Talk But Can't Walk the Walk

This time around, however, Paris, Berlin and Moscow are taking a different line. The neo-Gaullist regime of Jacques Chirac in France has put itself forward as the main spokesman for anti-American bourgeois nationalism in Europe. But that role does not correspond to the actual balance of economic and military forces in Europe. France's exalted diplomatic status as one of five permanent members of the UN Security Council, with the right to veto American-supported resolutions, is a carryover from the early years of the Cold War. Despite its small nuclear arsenal—the *force de frappe*—France is a second-level imperialist state.

Germany is the dominant economic power in Europe. And then there's Russia waiting in the wings. Capitalist counterrevolution has led to a catastrophic economic and social decline unprecedented in the history of any modern, industrialized country. Nonetheless, Russia's new capitalist rulers inherited from the USSR a powerful nuclear arsenal and strong conventional armed forces. An alliance between Germany's economic and technological resources and Russia's military potential would create a formidable challenge to American global dominance.



AP

Ankara, Turkey February 15 antiwar protest. Sign reads: "No to American Aggression."

For the moment, however, France is trying to act as spoiler to the U.S. at the diplomatic level. This is not, in fact, something new. France played the maverick in the Western alliance during the Cold War, too. Since the regime of Charles de Gaulle in the 1960s, French ruling circles have flaunted their "independence" from Washington without, however, seriously opposing American strategic interests.

Taking advantage of the close ties between the U.S. and Zionist Israel, de Gaulle and his successors reoriented French policy in the Near East toward "radical" Arab nationalist states like the Ba'athist regimes in Syria and especially Iraq. While the latter mainly depended on Soviet military aid and diplomatic support, the Iraqi regime also cultivated good relations with France and vice versa. In the 1970s, the state-owned Iraq Company for Oil Operations agreed to provide France with almost a quarter of its total output. In turn, France became a major weapons supplier to the Iraqi military. Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the defense minister in the Socialist government of François Mitterrand in the 1980s, was a founder at the time of the Iraqi-French Friendship Association.

During the diplomatic run-up to the 1991 Gulf War, Mitterrand played "soft cop" to Bush Sr.'s America. For example, he proposed a UN resolution "linking" the withdrawal of the Iraqi army from Kuwait (which is part of the American oil empire in the Arabian peninsula) with Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian Occupied Territories. In the 1990s, France along with Russia pressed for a relaxation of the economic sanctions against Iraq but was rebuffed by the Clinton White House. So they have continued to participate in the starvation blockade of Iraq.

The Iraq Crisis and the New World Disorder

Why then the sudden and massive explosion in West Europe of opposition to a U.S. military takeover of Iraq? The usual answer is a simple one: George W. Bush. Certainly, this extreme right-wing administration in Washington, with its "America über alles" ideology, has aggravated tensions with its European "allies" and inflamed European public opinion. There is real hatred for the racist warmonger in the White House among the working people of Europe, just as there is among workers, blacks and Latinos in the U.S.

But popular hatred of war has nothing to do with the reasons that the French Gaullists and German Social Democratic leaders are now talking at a U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. The current rift in the Western "alliance" is in part conditioned by the world economic downturn precipitated by the Wall Street crash. During the 1990s, European, especially German, industrialists and financiers made a lot of money in the U.S. through increased export earnings, increased sales revenue from their American-based operations and capital gains on their holdings of high-tech and other American corporate stocks. But then the U.S. boom went

bust, and many Europeans took a bath as the S&P 500 and NASDAQ indices went south. To make matters worse, the Bush administration has resorted to trade protectionism, for example, on imports of steel.

The U.S. move to take over Iraq has brought to a head an array of accumulated grievances in French and German ruling circles—trade policy, the Anglo-American cartel's control of the world oil market, the flaunting of U.S. power around the world from Afghanistan to the Philippines. The Bush gang has responded by seeking to undermine French/German leadership of the European Union. In late January, Secretary of State Colin Powell lined up the governments of Britain, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Portugal, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to issue a pro-war and pro-American statement in no less an authoritative organ than the *Wall Street Journal*.

Powell's ploy exposed and deepened the division in Europe between East and West. The new capitalist rulers of the countries of the former Soviet bloc (e.g., Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic) have joined the EU or applied for membership with the expectation of being generously subsidized by the far wealthier West European countries, centrally Germany. But now they are being offered the opportunity to play off Washington against Paris and Berlin for perhaps even greater economic rewards. French president Chirac was so incensed that the new and aspiring EU members in East Europe supported the American position on Iraq that he lashed out: "It is not well brought-up behavior.... They missed a good opportunity to shut up."

Underlying Chirac's tirade are a couple of basic truths. First, France, even in concert with Germany, lacks the economic resources, much less military power, to check American influence even in France's own backyard. Second, there is no such thing as "Europe" in a political sense. The EU is a bloc of bourgeois national states whose rulers pursue their own conflicting interests, often knifing one another in the back.

In fact, the period prior to the Iraq crisis was one of substantial conflict among major EU states. France and Germany were fighting over agricultural subsidies; France and Italy over the regulations governing trade in wine and cheese; France and Britain over job losses from the closure of British firms in France. The only policies these West European capitalist regimes were collaborating in were police-state measures against immigrants and intensified attacks on the union movement and social programs.

Chirac and German Social Democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder are now acting more or less in tandem in opposing an immediate invasion of Iraq. However, the overall policies of France and Germany in the Near East are quite different, to a degree even counterposed. Orienting toward the Arab nationalist regimes, French ruling circles profess (however hypocritically) sympathy for the Palestinian cause. Moreover, France has a large Arab population, mainly from its former North African colonies, who are fervent supporters of the Palestinian resistance to the murderous Israeli occupation. Germany, on the other hand, has been a major provider of economic aid to Israel, second only to the U.S. Hence the effect of an American invasion of Iraq on Israel/Palestine would likely disrupt the current Paris/Berlin bloc vis-à-vis the U.S.

The Zionist rulers are looking forward to the American attack on Iraq as an opportunity to completely crush the Palestinian resistance, possibly by driving the Palestinian population into the surrounding Arab states. *Le Monde* (20 February) quoted a "very senior military official" who recalled that "the first Intifada [Palestinian uprising] was stopped by the first Gulf War." The current Palestinian uprising "could finish the same way," he declared, "if the American attack takes place and it is victorious."

While Washington openly hacks its Israeli junior partners in their bloody repression of the Palestinians, it currently postures as a defender of the Kurdish national minority in Iraq. But nowhere is the cynicism of U.S. imperialism's proclamations of "liberating" the Iraqi people clearer than in the horse trading over the Kurds. In order to secure Turkey as a platform for an American invasion into northern Iraq, the U.S. is giving the Ankara regime billions of dollars and license for its army, notorious for its war of annihilation in Turkish Kurdistan, to occupy Kurdish areas of Iraq. The imperialists are dead set against any expression of Kurdish national self-determination.

Only within a socialist federation of the Near East can the national rights of all the main peoples of the region be achieved, from the Palestinians to the Kurdish population, which is divided among Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. The realization of a *socialist republic of united Kurdistan* requires the proletarian overthrow of all four of those bourgeois states.

AP

Antiwar demonstrators fill Madrid's Puerta del Sol square during worldwide day of protest.

For Unconditional Military Defense of North Korea and China!

The impending U.S. invasion of Iraq is to be carried out in the name of the "global war on terror" declared by the U.S. rulers following the criminal 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center by Islamic fundamentalists. Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network and its Afghan *mujahedin* supporters were originally *organized, armed and financed by the CIA* to fight the Soviet Army in Afghanistan in the 1980s. In 1989, the "liberal" Stalinist regime of Mikhail Gorbachev withdrew the last Soviet forces from Afghanistan in order to appease American imperialism. The retreat of Soviet power in Central Asia was quickly followed by the capitalist counterrevolution which swept across East Europe and then destroyed the USSR itself.

In the aftermath, Washington seized on "Islamic terrorism" as a new external enemy against which to rally the population. For their part, the Afghan-based Islamic fundamentalist terrorists turned on their former American paymasters. The U.S. rulers justified the invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001 as a war of vengeance. It also served a broader strategic purpose by introducing U.S. military forces into Central Asian countries bordering both Russia and China.

Iraq, of course, had nothing whatsoever to do with the 9/11 attack. The Arab nationalist regime in Baghdad and Islamic fundamentalist groups like Al Qaeda are mortal enemies. Recall that Saddam Hussein was a Soviet client while Osama bin Laden was a CIA asset during Cold War II.

The Bush gang has made it clear that after the takeover of Iraq its next target will be North Korea. Standing behind North Korea, geographically and politically, is China, by far the most powerful of the remaining states where capitalism has been overthrown (the others being North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba). Having succeeded in their decades-long goal of destroying the Soviet Union, the American imperialists view the continued existence of the People's Republic of China as a very large piece of unfinished business. Their goal: to reverse the 1949 Chinese Revolution in order to subjugate and exploit China. Their strategy: to combine external military pressure with internal capitalist penetration facilitated by the "market reforms" of the venal Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy.

We stand for the defense of the Chinese and North Korean bureaucratically deformed workers states against imperialist attack from without and capitalist counterrevolution from within. Especially in the present context, that means supporting the right of North Korea to develop nuclear weapons along with the delivery system necessary to make them an effective deterrent to the Pentagon war machine.

Precisely because North Korea might have a few nukes and effective medium-range missiles and certainly does have a strong conventional armed force, even Bush & Co. are moving against it in a cautious and roundabout way. For now, they're trying to line up Japan, Russia and China to put economic pressure on the Kim Jong Il regime to restore "international" (i.e., imperialist) control over its nuclear facilities.

The key country here is China, which provides most of the economic aid, especially food and fuel, upon which the beleaguered and impoverished Pyongyang regime depends. China has the power to block any U.S. move for stronger economic sanctions against North Korea not only in the UN Security Council but, more importantly, in the real world. However, the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy has repeatedly emphasized agreement with the imperialists' demands for a "nonnuclear Korean peninsula" and has sought to lean on the Pyongyang regime to "moderate" its policies. Such criminal appeasement only emboldens the imperialists in their drive to foment counterrevolution in China itself.

Fundamentally, the defense of those states where capitalism has been overthrown requires the extension of proletarian rule to the advanced capitalist countries. Yet this perspective is not only alien but anathema to the nationalist bureaucratic castes that rule in China and North Korea. The Stalinist bureaucrats in Beijing and Pyongyang fear that socialist revolution in South Korea and Japan would quickly inspire proletarian political revolutions against themselves by the Chinese and North Korean workers and peasants. Likewise, a political revolution in China or North Korea would have an enormous impact on South Korea and on Japan, the industrial powerhouse of Asia.

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!

Seizing on the World Trade Center attack to get a lock on power, the Bush administration has unleashed a "war on terror" whose domestic face has been a racist witchhunt against Arabs and Muslims, with the civil liberties of the population as a whole increasingly put through the shredder. Beginning with the arbitrary detention and forced interrogation of thousands of non-citizens, the government has gone on to assert that those citizens deemed "enemy combatants" also have no citizenship rights. Its ultimate target is the labor movement, the real "enemy within" in the eyes of the American bourgeoisie, as seen in the invocation of "national security" against a threatened West Coast longshore strike last year. Meanwhile, the White House showers tax cuts on the rich and strips inner-city kids even of their school lunches.

But as the huge turnout for last week's antiwar protests and the number of trade-union resolutions against a war demonstrate, the patriotic "one nation indivisible" hysteria whipped up following 9/11 has grown thin under the weight of recession, mass layoffs and grotesque corporate corruption. And with its heavily working-class and black and Hispanic base, the U.S. military is a reflection of the class and racial contradictions of civil society. An article in the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* (19 January) reports on widespread sentiment among the sailors of the USS *Kitty Hawk* and other ships of the Seventh Fleet against an attack on Iraq.

It could not be clearer that the multiracial working people of America and the semicolonial masses of Iraq have a common enemy in the war-crazed, labor-hating gang in the White House and the capitalist class it represents. But the labor tops and the reformist organizers of the antiwar protests seek to channel the growing opposition to U.S. military adventures abroad and the anger building at the base of this society into the "lesser evil" Democratic Party of American imperialism. In fact, because of its image as a "friend" of labor and black people, the Democratic Party has historically been the preferred party of war for the bourgeoisie. Those Democrats who have spoken out against "Bush's war" hope to position themselves to get out ahead of and contain any opposition and turmoil that the war against Iraq could generate among working people and minorities.

Antiwar youth, labor militants and fighters for black and immigrant rights must understand that any genuine opposition to imperialist war must be based on class struggle and political protest independent of all the parties and agencies of capitalist class rule. *Defend Iraq against U.S. attack! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers at home! Break with the Democratic Party of war and racism! Build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution!* ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Revolutionary Internationalists on the March

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ICL in Worldwide Protests

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February 15: Spartacist contingents in antiwar demonstrations in London and Paris (top) and Berlin. SpAD banner in Berlin reads: "Down With Racist State Terror! For Class Struggle Against German Capitalist Rulers! Defend Iraq Against Imperialist Attack!"

From New York City to Johannesburg to London, the International Communist League stood out in the gigantic protests against war on Iraq on the weekend of February 15-16, mobilizing contingents and sales teams to intervene with a program of proletarian revolutionary internationalism. Unlike pacifists, we take a side, fighting for the defense of Iraq against imperialist attack without giving an iota of political support to the regime of Saddam Hussein, the butcher of Iraqi leftists, workers and Kurds. As we underlined in the ICL statement "Down With the UN Starvation Blockade! Defend Iraq Against U.S. and Allied Imperialist Attack!" (reprinted in *WV* No. 790, 1 November 2002), which was translated into eight languages and distributed at the protests:

> "The colossal military advantage of the United States against neocolonial Iraq—a country which has already been bled white through 12 years of UN sanctions which have killed more than 1.5 million civilians—underscores the importance of class struggle in the imperialist centers as the chief means to give content to the call to defend Iraq. Every strike, every labor mobilization against war plans, every mass protest against attacks on workers and minorities, every struggle against domestic repression and against attacks on civil liberties represents a dent in the imperialist war drive. To put an end to war once and for all, the capitalist system that breeds war must be swept away through a series of revolutions and the establishment of a rational, planned, egalitarian socialist economy on a world scale."

Our intervention sharply distinguished us from an entire spectrum of self-styled "socialists" both in the U.S.—where the protest organizers seek to channel opposition to the war into support for "antiwar" Democrats—and throughout Europe, where the mass antiwar protests against "Bush's war" are being channeled in the national-chauvinist direction of getting one's "own" rulers to stand up to American imperialism. This was particularly the case in France, where most of the left rallied behind the neo-Gaullist regime of Jacques Chirac, hailing its obstruction of the U.S. in the UN Security Council. Having assisted in getting Chirac elected, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) issued a statement calling on "the French authorities and parliament to use all means in their power to stop a war against Iraq." In a leaflet mobilizing for a revolutionary internationalist contingent in the Paris demonstration, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France exposed this revolting fraud:

> "The truth is that 'the French authorities' have the blood of a million Algerians on their hands as well as tens of thousands of Vietnamese and other colonial victims. Now, with the Marcoussis agreements which confirm a 'regime change' in the Ivory Coast at the gunpoint of thousands of French soldiers and with the support of the UN, the French are putting together all of the elements for a bloodbath, as they did in Rwanda in 1994."

Cheering for French imperialism was a theme of the demonstrations throughout Europe, echoed also in the U.S. protests. Disgustingly, Ahmed Ben Bella, who was president of Algeria following its independence from France, proclaimed in addressing the London demonstration: "*Vive la France!*" Ben Bella should try chanting this to the Algerian population in the Paris suburbs, which faces deadly racist terror at the hands of the French state and Le Pen's fascist National Front. That Le Pen issued a call on his stormtroopers to join in the Paris antiwar march is a measure of the deadly chauvinism behind appeals to the French bourgeoisie to "stop" the war against Iraq.

In France and elsewhere, we championed the defense of immigrants and their families who have been the first targets of the "war on terror," the opening shot worldwide for the imperialist rulers in augmenting their machinery of state repression, which is aimed straight at the heart of the working class. In Athens, where the demonstration was tear-gassed by police, our supporters combatted the chauvinism of those leftists, like the Greek Communist Party, who declare that the European Union (EU), currently headed by Greece, should have the deciding vote on war against Iraq. As an expression of proletarian internationalism, we distributed the ICL statement in Greek and Turkish.

The Turkish statement was also distributed by our comrades at the mass protests in London and Berlin. Turkish workers are a vital and combative component of the proletariat in Germany. In Berlin, a Kurdish contingent gave our comrade their bullhorn to lead chants when they heard our slogans opposing the EU ban on the Kurdish nationalist PKK, which has long been brutally repressed by the Turkish state. In France, where Arab workers are a strategic and militant part of the proletariat and a critical link to the working and oppressed masses in North Africa and the Near East, our Paris contingent had signs in Arabic opposing the racist state terror of the government's "Vigipirate" campaign and calling for the defense of the Palestinians against Zionist terror.

Our contingents and interventions also drew a sharp class line internationally with our forthright calls for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state, including its right to nuclear weapons. This too cut against the pacifism and class collaborationism of the protest organizers. Speaker after speaker railed against the nuclear cowboys in the White House. But the leftists who now head various "antiwar" coalitions made their own contribution to the emergence of U.S. imperialism as the world's unrivaled military power through their support to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the former Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states. Although bureaucratically degenerated and undermined by Stalinist misrule, the Soviet Union possessed military might that held the ambitions of U.S. imperialism in check. Now the American rulers see nothing standing in the way of their riding roughshod over the entire planet.

We fought until the bitter end for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union, throwing every resource at our disposal into the struggle to stop capitalist counterrevolution. Our purpose was to reimplant the revolutionary internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party through proletarian political revolution against the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy. We continue that fight today in defense of China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. In contrast, those leftists who stood on the side of imperialism in its

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 799 | 14 March 2003

Getty

All U.S. Troops Out of the Near East Now!

Defend Iraq!

Down With U.S. Imperialism!

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!

MARCH 11—Over the last two weeks, the U.S. drive to war against Iraq has suffered one diplomatic setback after another. Last week, the Turkish parliament rejected an American proposal to place 62,000 U.S. troops in the country as an invasion force for northern Iraq. This was followed by a raucous United Nations Security Council meeting where France and Russia said they would block the U.S./British resolution authorizing war. And yesterday they explicitly vowed to veto the resolution.

But regardless of the diplomatic wrangling, George Bush has made clear his intent to go to war. Current American deployment in the Persian Gulf region includes some 250,000 troops, five aircraft carriers, 100 warships, 1,000 fighter jets and 1,800 tanks and ground artillery vehicles—all this against a depleted Iraqi army with barely the spare parts to maintain itself. Despite the Turkish vote, the U.S. is already moving troops and weaponry through Turkey to the Iraqi border, while otherwise laying the groundwork for a full-scale invasion. In a drastic escalation of air strikes in recent weeks, U.S. and British jets have been flying hundreds of sorties and destroying communications and other facilities. Now U.S. forces are tearing down the electrified fence in the "demilitarized zone" on the Kuwaiti/Iraqi border.

This will be a bloody, one-sided slaughter: The Pentagon is planning to slam 3,000 "smart bombs" into Iraq in the first 48 hours of war. Washington's stated aim is a "shock and awe" offensive to shatter Iraq "physically, emotionally and psychologically." This is the policy of *Schrecklichkeit*, the deliberate terrorizing of the "enemy" population carried out by Hitler's Third Reich in World War II—and by the "democratic" imperialists in the firebombing of Hamburg, Dresden and Tokyo and the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the coming war, the U.S. is planning to use a new MOAB (Massive Ordnance Air Burst) bomb, which has the impact of a small nuclear bomb, and is also talking of using actual nuclear "bunker-buster" bombs.

The peoples of the Near East cannot but burn with bitterness at the hypocrisy of the Bush gang prattling on about Iraq's supposed "weapons of mass destruction" while Israel maintains the largest arsenal of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons in the region. While Bush cynically denounces the "human rights" violations of the Saddam Hussein regime, Israel continues to pound, starve, terrorize and slaughter Palestinians with impunity. Over 60 percent of the population of the Occupied Territories now subsists on less than $2 a day and crippling malnutrition is rampant, especially among children.

Under the cover of an Iraq war, the government of Ariel Sharon, which includes parties openly committed to the forcible "transfer" of all Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, may well try to implement this genocidal policy. As a member of the "left" Zionist Meretz party wrote in a 7 March *Ha'aretz* piece: "We do not have gas chambers and crematoria, but there is no one fixed method for genocide." Indeed Benny Alon, one of

continued an page 8

All U.S. Troops Out of Korea!

Defend North Korea's Right to Nuclear Weapons!

When four North Korean MIG fighters intercepted a U.S. RC-135S spy plane over the Sea of Japan off the Korean coast on March 2, Washington predictably denounced it as a provocation. One can only imagine what the U.S. would do if North Korea were flying spy planes 150 miles off the American coast. The real provocation is the presence of 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea, an occupation force established at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War in which U.S. imperialism devastated the peninsula and killed more than three million people. Now the Pentagon has ordered 24 B-1 and B-52 bombers to Guam, within easy striking distance of Pyongyang. And, on March 3, the U.S. began a month of military exercises in South Korea involving over 300,000 American and South Korean troops, a move described by the North's official news agency as "driving the situation to the brink of a war."

In the face of U.S. imperialism's threats, we call on the internatianal proletariat ta stand far the unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed warkers state against imperialism. This crucially includes the right af North Karea to develop nuclear weapans to defend itself against the U.S. nuclear cawboys.

Last year, Bush declared North Korea part of an "axis of evil," and a few months later the Pentagon published a

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WV Photo

Spartacists at February 16 San Francisco protest against Iraq war.

Chicago Transit Unions: Defend Your Members!

Cop Rampage Against Black Bus Drivers

CHICAGO—At about 9:20 p.m. on February 7, black Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) bus driver Henry Walker, a member of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241, pulled his bus over at 39th and Cottage Grove for a routine stop. Minutes later, Walker found himself spread face down on the hood of a police car as a gang of white cops pummeled his back and neck, then dragged him off to jail and slapped him with bogus felony charges of aggravated assault and battery against a cop. Held for three days in custody, Walker now faces a possible prison sentence of five or more years. His "crime"? Having witnessed the cops brutally beating a black man as he lay handcuffed in the street. We demand: *Drop the charges against Henry Walker!*

When Walker first stopped his bus, a shaken black woman got on board and appealed to the passengers for help because the police were attacking her boyfriend. One of the cops demanded that Walker get off the bus. When he refused, citing CTA policy, the cops dragged him out of his seat, ripping off his uniform sweater. Walker was punched in the face, his arm was twisted behind his back as he was handcuffed, and he was then slammed down on the squad car. As they beat him, the cops snarled that he could "kiss this job goodbye" and threatened: "Don't you know who the f--k we are?" At the station, Walker heard his attackers laughing and joking in an adjoining room as they cooked up a story and concocted the charges against him.

In a February 22 letter to Cook County State's Attorney Richard Devine demanding that the charges against Walker be dropped, the Partisan Defense Committee stated: "The current charges are an obvious fabrication designed to cover the cops' dirty work and to punish Walker and intimidate him and the bus passengers from serving as witnesses." The letter continued, "This vicious police attack against a black trade unionist is a threat to all working people, black people and minorities in Chicago. Bus operators, who have a grueling job providing a vital public service, have been the target of escalating racist cop attacks."

Last July, a white Chicago cop called bus operator Arlene Russell a "stupid black bitch," and when she called the city's Office of Professional Standards to protest this racist abuse, the cop tried to grab her cellphone, twisted her arm and arrested her on bogus battery charges (see "Chicago Transit Workers Rally to Defend Arlene Russell," *WV* No. 789, 18 October 2002). Three months later, a white cop pressed felony battery charges against Karen Kelly, another black bus driver, on the ludicrous claim that she had intentionally tried to run him down with her bus.

Racist cop terror is "business as usual" in Segregation City. But the increased assaults against unionized black bus drivers in recent months is *more* than usual. It is no coincidence that these police attacks come in the midst of the government's "war on terror" and its preparations for war against Iraq. The domestic face of the "war on terror" is a war against immigrants, labor and minorities. As the Feds shred civil liberties in the name of "homeland security" and panic the population with incessant "terror alerts," the racist cops feel they have the green light to run roughshod over working people, black people and immigrants.

Walker's co-workers in Local 241 have risen to his defense, posting flyers in bus barns and mobilizing for his first court appearance on February 14, as they have also done for Arlene Russell and Karen Kelly. With its members being beaten by racist cops and hauled before the bosses' courts, the ATU must bring its social power to bear to demand that the charges against these unionists be dropped now!

But the ATU bureaucracy undermines the defense of the union and its members against the capitalist state by supporting the USA-Patriot Act, under which striking transit workers could be slapped with federal "terrorism" charges for something as simple as defending their own picket lines. Along with the police attacks on its members, ATU Local 241 has faced the CTA's union-busting assaults while working for three years without a contract. What is needed is to mobilize the labor movement in defense of immigrants, black people and all working people—at home and abroad—against the all-sided attacks of the racist capitalist rulers.

WV Photo

Henry Walker, victim of cop attack.

We urge all labor, minority rights, student and community organizations to demonstrate their solidarity by attending the next court dates for the three bus drivers. Henry Walker's next court appearance will be on March 19 at 9 a.m. at Chicago's Criminal Courts Building, 2600 S. California St., Room 101. Karen Kelly is due to appear on April 11 at 10 a.m. at the Skokie Civic Court, 5600 Old Orchard Road, Skokie. Arlene Russell is going to trial in Chicago on April 21 at 9 a.m. at 1340 S. Michigan Avenue, Room 501. We also urge that protest statements be sent to: Richard Devine, Cook County State's Attorney, 500 Richard J. Daley Center, Chicago, IL 60602. Fax: (312) 603-3000.■

Capitalist Militarism and State Repression

TROTSKY

LENIN

Increasing military aggression by U.S. imperialism abroad is being accompanied at home by the wholesale shredding of democratic rights. At the dawn of the imperialist age, revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg pointed to this tendency in polemicizing against revisionist "socialists" whose perspective of transforming capitalism through parliamentary reforms was antithetical to the fight for proletarian revolution.

On closer examination, the uninterrupted ascent of democracy, which to our revisionism, as well as to bourgeois liberalism, appears as a great fundamental law of human history and, at the very least, of modern history, is shown to be a phantom. No absolute and universal relation can be constructed between capitalist development and democracy. The political form is always the result of the whole sum of political factors, domestic as well as foreign. Within its boundaries it admits all variations of the scale, from absolute monarchy to the democratic republic....

Two factors completely dominate the political life of contemporary states: *world politics* and the labor movement. Each is only a different aspect of the present phase of capitalist development.

As a result of the development of the world economy and the aggravation and generalization of competition on the world market, militarism and marinism [naval militarism] as instruments of world politics have become a decisive factor in the internal as well as in the the external life of the great states. If it is true that world politics and militarism represent a *rising* tendency in the present phase, then bourgeois democracy must logically move in a *descending* line.

—Rosa Luxemburg, "Social Reform or Revolution" (1899); reprinted in *Selected Political Writings of Rosa Luxemburg* (1971)

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No. 799 **14 March 2003**

Spartacist League/TLC Forums

Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack!
Down With UN Starvation Blockade!

Iraq: Women's Liberation and the Fight for Socialist Revolution

Speaker: Amy Rath, Spartacist League/U.S., former editor of *Women and Revolution*

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Don't Crawl for the Democrats—
The Other Party of Racism and War

U.S. Imperialism's Legacy of Jim Crow

Saturday, March 15, 5 p.m.
University of Illinois—Chicago (UIC)
Circle Center (CCC) Room 613, 750 S. Halsted St.
CHICAGO
For more information: (312) 563-0441

Down With U.S./Canadian Imperialism!

Defend Iraq!

Saturday, March 29, 7 p.m.
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor St. W., Room 2211
(above St. George Station)
For more information: (416) 593-4138
TORONTO

France: Stop the Deportations!
Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

The following statement was issued by the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League.

PARIS, March 6—The racist war against immigrants in Europe quickens apace with the preparations for war against Iraq. On February 26, the French government deported 15 Chinese immigrants to Beijing on a commercial flight. Now the government has resumed the hated practice of mass deportations by charter flights. Deportations by charter were the hallmark of anti-immigrant racism of the Mitterand government with [Interior Minister] Pasqua's round-up and deportation of African immigrants to Mali in 1986—a racist atrocity which incited public outrage and protest. On March 3, a joint police-state operation by the French and German government deported 54 Senegalese and Ivoirians. One Senegalese was thrown on board in Germany, the others were taken from Paris, surrounded by overwhelming police force and packed off to Dakar and Abidjan. Yesterday, 17 Chinese were deported by charter to Hong Kong and [French top cop] Sarkozy promises more. *We say: Stop the deportations!*

These deportations take place from airports organized by powerful trade unions. The French proletariat has the power to stop these planes on the tarmac. Some Air France pilots refuse, as individuals, to carry out these deportations. On January 30, two Air France unions protested the murder of an Argentine immigrant, Ricardo Barrientos, who died while the French police expelled him from the country. Again in January, Mariame Getu Hagos, a Somali immigrant, died while being deported. Thousands of asylum-seekers face death if returned to their countries of origin, if they're lucky to make it that far and aren't killed by the French cops first! The French cops even attacked Air Africa workers in Abidjan who protested when the charter of expelled Africans arrived on March 3. The cops who attack immigrants are the same who harass youth of immigrant origin in the ghettos of France and Germany: last Sunday, a 17-year-old youth, Mourad, was killed by the gendarmes in Nîmes. These are also the same cops who harass unionists like Alain Hébert in Normandy or the truckers during their 2002 strike, or who laid siege to the building of the German union federation, the DGB, in February 2002 during a conference against the Afghanistan war. The cops are the guard dogs of the capitalist bosses and their government. *We say: Cops out of the unions!*

Today the government attacks immigrants because they think they can get away with it. They count on the time-worn "divide and conquer" scheme of racism. We better prove them wrong! The powerful unions of the French proletariat, the German proletariat and the trade union organizations across Europe should stand by their most vulnerable class brothers and sisters. Give every man and woman in the hellish detention centers and squats a union membership card and mobilize the power of the organized working class in their defense! The powerful unions like IG Metall in Germany and the CGT in France have many members of immigrant origin and have an interest in fighting against these attacks. Chirac, Sarkozy and Schröder will use the same repression against *all* the workers when they go on strike against layoffs and privatizations, in order to defend pensions in France and social benefits in Germany. What is necessary is equal rights for all. ***Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***

These mass expulsions of immigrants by Germany and France show the real face of imperialist "old Europe." Far from representing the "peace camp" in Iraq, France and Germany only want to preserve their economic interests in the Near East and a bigger share of the spoils. Their frictions with the United States reflect the increased interimperialist rivalries since the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution. In the framework of a worsening economic crisis and looming imperialist war against Iraq, France and Germany are escalating racist campaigns on the "home front," from the *Rasterfahndung* (racial profiling of Arabs or Muslims) in Germany to Vigipirate police-state measures against immigrants in France. Their "war on terror" is designed to marginalize the most vulnerable workers, to weaken the working class by dividing it between European and immigrant, the better to carry out assaults on the *entire* workers movement and its gains wrested through decades of class struggles. With the new laws put into place since September 11, Germany is getting ready to deport the reactionary Islamic fundamentalist, Kaplan, to Turkey. This is an ominous prelude to massive deportations of Turkish and Kurdish leftists—deportations to death at the hands of the chauvinist Turkish bourgeoisie which is preparing a war against the Kurds in northern Iraq.

Chirac Talks "Peace" and Wages War on Immigrants, Labor

AFP

November 2002: Paris protesters demand papers for all undocumented immigrants.

[French president] Chirac's visit to Algeria was met by crowds chanting "Visas, visas!" at the same time that Sarkozy is making it more difficult to obtain a visa to even *visit* France. Immigrants from Africa flee the ravages of civil war, as in the Ivory Coast; bloody repression as in Kabylia [Berber region in Algeria]; and squalid living conditions under the oppressive yoke of French imperialism. At the same time that French imperialism is expelling Ivoirians, French troops are setting the stage for a bloodbath in the Ivory Coast, as they did in Rwanda in 1994. ***French troops out of the Ivory Coast!*** In Germany, Kurdish and Turkish refugees flee political repression and misery generated by the support of NATO and the German bourgeoisie to the murderous regime in Turkey. Chinese immigrants flee unemployment and misery generated by the incursions of the capitalist market which threaten the Chinese deformed workers state. The only "freedom" that capitalism can bring to China is the "freedom" to die of hunger and the "freedom" of the imperialists to exploit China as they exploit the rest of the globe. ***We Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defense of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba against capitalist counterrevolution from within and imperialism without!***

The posture of the French and German capitalist governments as more rational and "humanitarian" than the war-crazed Bush gang in Washington is obscene. The aircraft carrier *Charles DeGaulle* steamed on "manuevers" to the eastern Mediterranean so that France could participate in the imperialist rape and plunder of Iraq. While the imperialists amass an enormous arsenal of destruction in the region and threaten to drop 3,000 bombs in the first 48 hours of war, France and Germany play the wolves in sheep's clothing—insisting that UN inspectors be given more time to work. The "work" of the United Nations is the starvation sanctions and economic blockade which has killed more than 1.5 million Iraqi men, women and children—far more than were killed in the last Gulf War. France and Germany push UN weapons inspectors whose purpose is to render Iraq unarmed and defenseless to ensure an easy win for the imperialists.

Without giving the least political support to the murderer, Saddam Hussein, we in the International Communist League take a side: ***Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! All U.S. and allied troops out of the Persian Gulf now!*** As for the supposed "peace loving" nature of the German and French capitalist governments, any examination of their recent histories reveals mountains of human corpses! The German bourgeois state is the successor of the Nazi Third Reich that exterminated millions of Jews. During the Algerian War the French bourgeoisie killed over a million Algerians and tortured even more. This whole current campaign around the "French-German-Russian" plan is used in France to reinforce reactionary national unity behind Chirac, and in Germany to save the face of the SPD [Social Democratic Party]-Green government which is increasingly unpopular because of its attacks on the labor movement.

The road to mass deportations in France today was paved by the policies of the French reformists from the PS [Socialist Party] to the PC [Communist Party], whose previous government vastly escalated anti-immigrant hysteria and repressive "security campaigns." Even the LCR [Revolutionary Communist League] has to take some credit for this round of racist atrocities as they were the most energetic fake "socialists" who helped to put into place this reactionary government by voting for Chirac in the last presidential elections. Yesterday, March 5, two days after the mass deportations, the PC went into the streets during the demonstration against the war in Iraq to..."continue to demand the French authorities to remain firm, up to using the right of veto" in the UN, and the LCR had a similar call! Chevènement, ex-minister of the cops under [former prime minister] Jospin and particularly hated by the *sans-papiers* [undocumented immigrants] for the thousands of expulsions he carried out and the reinforcing of the anti-immigrant laws, tried to place himself at the head of the demonstration. We solidarize with the anarchist militants and the *sans-papiers* who chanted, "Throw out Chevènement, free the *sans-papiers*" in order to throw Chevènement out of the demonstration. But the LCR scandalously sent its goon squad to "protect" Chevènement (*Le Parisien*, 6 March)! This ignominious deed speaks volumes about the LCR's commitment to defend the capitalist system and how low they are willing to go to demonstrate to capitalist politicians that the LCR will be loyal servants in the next capitalist popular-front government.

Immigrant workers have a significant amount of social power in the unions in France and Germany and they represent a living bridge between Europe, Africa and the Near East. But in order to fight here against war and racism, it is necessary to fight against the capitalist system which generates them. For that, class independence of the workers from their capitalist exploiters and from the bourgeois state is necessary. That demands a split with the opportunists in the workers movement who, like the LCR, tie workers to their own national bourgeoisie, thus dividing the workers internationally. What's needed is an authentic Leninist-Trotskyist party, a revolutionary, multiethnic workers party dedicated to fighting for socialism and a world where those who labor will rule. The LTF is dedicated to this task. Join us! ■

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A Marxist Perspective on the Near East

We publish below a presentation by comrade Bruce André at a recent conference of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, translated from Le Bolchévik *No. 162 (Winter 2002-2003).*

LE BOLCHEVIK

Comrades, this discussion raises questions which are fundamental to building a revolutionary party, especially in the Near East. But before dealing with programmatic questions, I want to clarify the difference between three things: the Jewish people, which has existed for centuries quite independently of the state of Israel or even Zionism; the Hebrew-speaking nation located in Palestine; and the Zionist state. I think there has been a tendency to confuse them, especially the latter two, the Hebrew-speaking nation and the Zionist state.

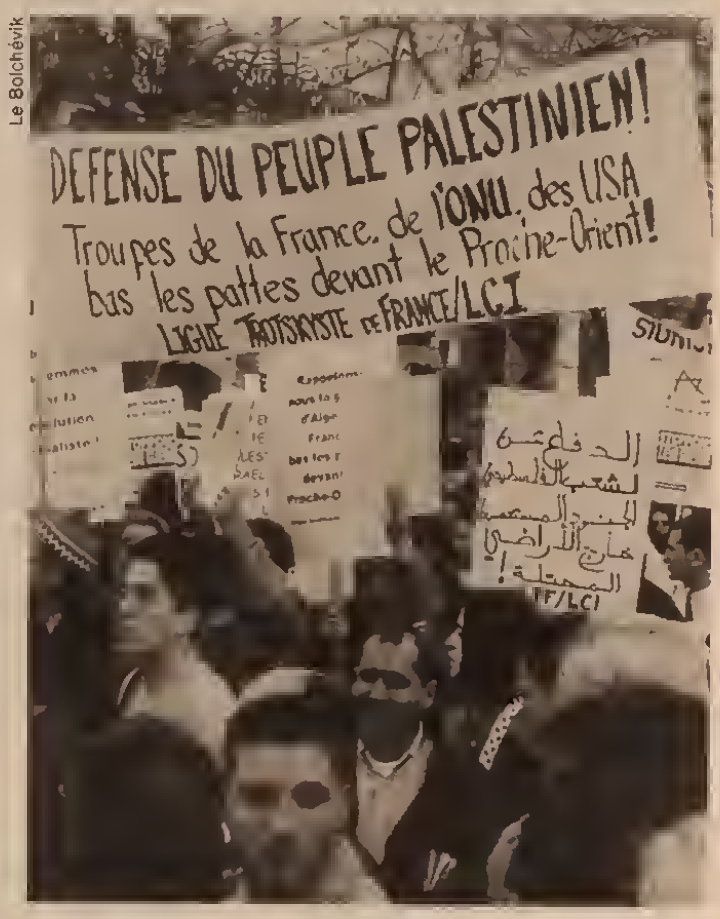
Let's start with the Jewish people. Our understanding has been framed by Abram Leon, in his book *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*. This book does not exist in Arabic, and I hope that we will one day be able to rectify that failure. Leon was a Belgian Trotskyist, who was murdered by the Nazis at the Auschwitz death camp. He gave a materialist explanation for the continued existence over centuries of the Jewish people in Europe with their own language, culture and religion, and for their brutal oppression under capitalism. Leon explained that the Jews do not constitute a nation, that is, a culturally homogeneous population occupying a given territory with their own national economy. This is the definition of a nation according to Leninist criteria. Rather, Leon said that the Jews played a particular social role in feudal and pre-feudal society as merchants and money-lenders. He called them a "people class."

It was this particular social role, living in the pores of feudal society, that provides a materialist explanation for the Jews' continued existence in West and East Europe. With the rise of mercantile capitalism in Europe, the Jews' special commercial role came to an end. In West Europe, they either assimilated or were pushed to the more economically backward East. There, in East Europe, the crumbling of the feudal order at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries came at a time when capitalism was already decaying. There was widespread unemployment and periodic economic crises. As a result, the Jews were exposed to the hostility of the petty bourgeoisie and peasants, who were also rejected by decaying capitalism.

These petty-bourgeois layers sought to find a place for themselves at the expense of the Jews and launched pogroms, anti-Jewish riots. A wave of refugees fleeing these pogroms arrived in West Europe at a time when capitalism could not absorb them there either, thus creating a similar problem in the West. In France, there were pogroms at the end of the 19th century around the Dreyfus affair. In Algeria too, by the way. In Germany, of course, there was the ultimate pogrom, one of the greatest horrors in human history: the Holocaust. The Nazis used modern capitalist production methods to carry out the systematic, conscious extermination of an entire people. The so-called democratic countries like the United States and Britain closed their doors to desperate Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis.

Now, Abram Leon does not deal with the question of Jews in Arab lands. It would be a good thing for our party to study and clarify the differences between the situation of the Jews in Europe and in Arab lands. But one important difference is that the development of capitalism in the Near East and North Africa did not proceed to a point where it provoked the kind of systematic, violent convulsions that took place in Europe. There were attacks against the Jews but not at the same level as in Europe. The condition of Jews in the Arab lands was markedly better than in Christian Europe.

This changed with the rise of Arab nationalism in the mid 20th century. Coming out of WW II, there was a wave of pogroms and terrorist attacks against synagogues and Jewish public places in almost all Arab countries. It reached a paroxysm during the 1948-49 war in Palestine. This triggered—with the active help of the Zionists, of course—a mass exodus of Jews from Arab countries, with most of them going to Israel. At the time of the formation of the state of Israel in 1947-48, there were as many Jews in the Arab countries speaking Arabic as their first language as there were in Israel speaking (or learning) Hebrew. Not surprisingly, the Jews from Arab countries and their descendants, known as Oriental Jews, are typically among the most reactionary and anti-Arab layers of the Israeli population.



March 2002: LTF banner at Paris Palestinian solidarity demonstration: "Defend the Palestinian People! French/UN/U.S. Troops Hands Off the Near East!"

Birth of the Zionist State

So, the Jews in Europe—as well as in Arab countries—were not a nation. The Jews living in Palestine before the Holocaust were not a nation, either. In the early 1930s, there were only slightly more than 100,000 Jews in Palestine, and many of them were not Zionists.

So how did a nation get formed out of these people? In Europe, before the Nazis came to power in 1933, Zionism was a tiny sect of petty-bourgeois intellectuals with no influence among the Jewish people. Those Jews in the ghettos of East Europe who were active in politics were primarily either communists or members of the Bund, a Jewish socialist movement close to the Mensheviks. What transformed Zionism into a mass movement was the world-historic defeat of the German working class in 1933 and the rise of Hitler to power. The rise of the Nazis in Germany also laid the basis for the creation of a nation of Hebrew-speaking people in Palestine by causing massive waves of Jewish emigration both before the Holocaust and again after WW II. The Zionists appealed directly to British imperialism, which controlled Palestine militarily, to sponsor a so-called "Jewish homeland." And the British rulers, anti-Semitic to the core, agreed because they saw it as a way to help divide and conquer in the Near East. There was the Balfour Declaration at the close of World War I in which the British promised the Zionists a homeland in Palestine. Today, of course, it is the U.S. imperialists who are the special patrons of the Zionist state.

Unlike many colonial settlers in history, the Zionists did not seek mainly to exploit Palestinians but rather to *displace* them and set up a closed economy of exclusively Jewish communities. And in this, through massive influx of Jewish labor and capital from Europe, they were ultimately successful. A major step in that direction occurred during the 1936-39 Arab revolt against British occupation. The Zionists played a key role in putting down the revolt, together with the British, through military terror directed against the Palestinians. By the time of the UN partition of 1947, a Hebrew-speaking nation had already been carved out of Palestine.

The 1947 partition set off a war in which the Zionists conquered what is today the state of Israel and drove out most of its Arab population through mass killings and terror. The Arab regimes intervened, not to defend the Palestinians against Zionist terror but to seize the land that had been allotted to them under the UN partition plan. Tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees who sought refuge in the surrounding Arab countries were forced to live in squalid refugee camps. In 1970, the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan launched a massive bloodbath against the Palestinians, with the implicit support of almost all the Arab regimes. This was called Black September. Yet despite the horrendous conditions in which they were forced to live, the Palestinian generation that grew up after 1948 was more highly educated than almost any other people in the Near East, including the Hebrew-speaking people of Israel.

At the time, the Palestinians played a role in the Near East similar in some ways to the Jews in East Europe. Cosmopolitan, politicized and educated, they played a disproportionate role in radical movements, including the Communist parties throughout the Near East. That fact gives a measure of the terrible consequences of Arab nationalism, as many Palestinians today, disillusioned by the total bankruptcy of Arafat's bourgeois-nationalist program have turned to the backward, anti-woman Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas.

The Palestinian Trotskyists took an essentially correct position on the 1948 war. They opposed the UN partition plan and were for the defeat of both sides through revolutionary working-class struggle. They correctly defended the national rights of the Hebrew-speaking nation to self-determination. As you know from the readings for this discussion, we initially took a position of

AP

Gaza City homes demolished by Israeli troops in February as Zionist rulers ratchet up anti-Palestinian terror in lead-up to Iraq war.

siding militarily with the forces led by the Zionists because our evaluation of the situation was that the war threatened the very existence of the Hebrew people. We corrected our appreciation of the facts and changed our position, but we did not modify our underlying method. We stated:

> "Out of the destruction of European Jewry by Hitler (without whose aid the Zionists would have gone the way of the Shakers and other utopian sects) and at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs, a settler colony was transformed into a nation.
>
> "This Hebrew nation came into existence through force and violence, through the suppression, forced expulsion and genocide of other peoples. Communists must oppose this brutal national oppression. Yet once this historical fact is accomplished, we must certainly recognize that nation's right to self-determination, unless we prefer the alternative, namely national genocide....
>
> "Marxists could give military support to neither side in the 1948 Palestine war. Our position for proletarian internationalism requires viewing that war from the necessity of revolutionary defeatism on both sides, counterposing to the victory of either side the perspective of united proletarian struggle, which offers the only possibility for the genuine fulfillment of the right of self-determination—through a socialist federation of the Near East."
>
> —"Birth of the Zionist State," *WV* Nos. 33 and 45, 23 November 1973 and 24 May 1974

The Palestinian Trotskyists at the time were also sober about the enormous obstacles to united revolutionary struggle by Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers. The "Draft Theses on the Jewish Question" adopted by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International in 1947 pointed to some important joint strikes by Arab and Jewish workers, such as the big government workers strike in Haifa in 1946 and the oil refinery workers strike in 1947. But they also said:

> "At the present stage, *large-scale* unity between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine is unrealizable; only on a very limited scale and to the extent that a section of the Jewish workers is employed outside the 'closed' Jewish economy, has it been possible for Jewish-Arab strikes such as those of the past year to occur. But this does not mean that such unity is excluded for all time."

This is a point we have often made. It will take convulsive historical events to cause even a significant fraction of the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to make common cause with their Arab class brothers, but it is historically possible and necessary.

The State Is Not the Same Thing as a Nation

Let's be clear: When we speak of the Hebrew-speaking nation, this is not the same thing as the Zionist state that was set up following the 1947 UN partition. As I mentioned earlier, for Marxists, a nation is a people with its own language, culture and economy, occupying a given territory. A state is something very different. It is essentially an instrument of power through which a particular class maintains its class rule. It consists centrally of instruments of repression: the army, police, prison system, etc. Our attitude toward these two things is very different. We seek to smash the Zionist state, as we seek to smash all capitalist states, through socialist revolution. We particularly wish to smash the Zionist state because by its very nature it is inherently oppressive not only of the Hebrew-speaking working class but also and above all of the Palestinian people.

But what is our attitude toward the Hebrew-speaking nation? Our position on all nations is for their right to self-determination, that is, the right to form independent nation-states. We do not make a distinction on this point between oppressed nations which alone get the right to exist and oppressor nations which, according to some, do not. For us, it is simply a basic democratic right that Marxists recognize for all nations.

Marxist concepts like "class," "nation," "state," etc. have precise definitions, which are based on material reality. We are materialists. The widely held position that Jews in Israel today represent an "occupation" strikes me as based on a kind of moralism—that is, idealism—rather than materialism. It reminds me of the idea, which is widespread on the left, that there are "good" people, that is, the oppressed—one could say the "occupied" people—and "bad" people who are the oppressors and do not even have the right to exist. To speak of an "occupation" seems to me to imply that the programmatic consequence is: "Get rid of them." It is necessary to return to Marxist categories to avoid ending up in the trap of irredentist nationalism and to open the way to a revolutionary internationalist solution in which all peoples have a right *to exist*.

Interpenetrated Peoples

At the heart of the problem is the question of interpenetrated peoples. The process that led to the creation of the state of Israel was not unique. On the contrary, we have seen this many times in history. It is the policy of "divide and rule." The British were past masters at this. They did basically the same thing in Ireland when they divided it between North and South, and in India with a partition between Muslim Pakistan and India containing both Hindus and Muslims. The French did the same thing by splitting Lebanon from Syria.

I strongly suspect that somewhere in London there is a recipe book, probably written by Churchill, and entitled "How to Make a Partition." Here is the recipe. You take a region where there are two people with a long history of ethnic conflict, and you draw an artificial border according to the following criteria: on one side you have a country with a more or less homogeneous population, composed of the people that is the most numerous. But on the other side of the border, you have a country which is composed of two peoples, one of whom has a slight numerical advantage over the other. In that way, you get a people which lives constantly in fear that the other will one day be in the majority. This recipe works wonders for the imperialists and allows interventions and manipulations at will.

I think the French went to London to read that recipe book. They created this rump state, Lebanon, such that there was a slight majority of Christians, permanently terrified that one day the Muslims would have enough babies to become the majority. What finally happened is that the Palestinians driven out of Jordan by Black September ended up in Lebanon, and that tipped the balance. Lebanon exploded in civil war, which completely destroyed the country.

In Palestine, the partition plan was conceived according to the same recipe, but this time they showed the UN how to do it. They created a totally artificial state of Israel, which included much more than the territories occupied at the time by the Hebrew-speaking nation, drawing the borders in such a way as to have a Palestinian portion which was 100 percent Arab and a state of Israel where the Jews had a slight majority. But the Zionists were cooking according to a different recipe. They drove the Palestinians from the land that had been allotted to the Jews by the partition plan and also from much of the land that had been allotted to the Palestinians. And they populated it all with refugees pouring out of Europe following the Holocaust and with Oriental Jews driven out of the Arab countries with the rise of Arab nationalism.

By the end of this process, the territories occupied by the Hebrew-speaking nation had greatly expanded, and, importantly for the Zionists, they corresponded to the borders of the Zionist state. But, I repeat, these are not one and the same thing. We are for smashing the Zionist state, for the destruction of its army and the seizure of power by the proletariat. But we are not for the destruction of the nation that occupies that territory, with its own culture and its own economy. We defend its right to exist, its democratic right to self-determination, just as we defend these same rights for the Palestinian people.

Virtually all nations were forged through the forced expulsion and, in some cases, genocide of other peoples. It is not unique. Today it is called "ethnic cleansing." The United States, for example, was forged through the systematic extermination of native peoples. This genocide is still celebrated in films and popular culture. Does that mean that the U.S. today is occupied territory? Turkey is a real "prison house of peoples" for minorities like the Kurds. Does that mean Turks do not have a right to exist? Should all the descendants of the *conquistadors* be expelled from Latin America?

But let's be clear about this: the Left Bank and Gaza are today truly occupied territories. These are Palestinian territories which are being seized by the Zionists a little more each day. The settlers are the advance guard of that incursion. We are for stopping this incursion into Palestinian land and for this occupation to stop, even while recognizing that things have proceeded to a point where that is no simple task. There are now a large number of settlers, some 400,000 if we include East Jerusalem. These settlers are highly armed and closely linked with the Israeli army. They live largely in communities that are scattered across Palestinian territory like a string of fortresses. Thus, this is an extension into the Occupied Territories which is artificial and reversible. But that could change, particularly with the approaching war against Iraq. In our press we have warned that the Zionists may seize the opportunity to drive the Palestinians out of the Occupied Territories in a vast terror campaign.

The Example of Yugoslavia and the Russian Revolution

The problem for resolving the Palestinian question is that both peoples lay claim to essentially the same land. To set up an independent capitalist state for either the Palestinian Arabs or the Hebrew-speaking people can only mean denying that right for the other. These are geographically interpenetrated peoples. In such cases, a democratic solution to the national question can only come about through socialist revolution because only the proletariat in power has an interest in resolving national antagonisms and can begin to meet the material needs of all working people. This is not simply a case of wishful thinking. There are historical precedents that demonstrate that this program is realizable.

Look at Tito's Yugoslavia, a deformed workers state that arose from the victory of the Stalinist-led Partisans against the Nazi occupation in WWII. The Balkans had for centuries been the scene of ethnic bloodshed that makes the Palestinian-Hebrew conflict pale by comparison. The 1912 Balkan Wars, which Trotsky wrote about as a war correspondent, were the occasion for immense forced population transfers throughout the Balkans. The state of Yugoslavia, an artificial creation put together by the imperialists after WWI—mainly by French imperialism, by the way—exploded in ethnic bloodshed almost from the day of its creation.

However, the common experience of

continued on page 11

Praeger Inc.

Baghdad, July 1958: Opportunity for proletarian revolution was derailed by Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy and Iraqi Communist leadership.

Brian Hendler

Israeli public sector strike, 1997. Zionist garrison state must be destroyed from within through Arab-Hebrew workers revolution.

Young Spartacus

Defend S.F. Anarchist Protesters!

We print below a letter sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to San Francisco district attorney Terence Hallinan on March 3 protesting the arrests of antiwar demonstrators during an anarchist-organized breakaway march on February 16. In the face of vicious violence-baiting from the state and the media, the organizers of the main February 16 demonstration, including the Workers World Party-led International ANSWER and Not In Our Name, have explicitly distanced themselves from the arrested activists. These groups wish to remain "respectable" in the eyes of the bourgeois liberals and Democratic Party politicians they seek to attract in the name of "unity." Those opposed to the aims of U.S. imperialism must demand unequivocally that all charges be dropped against all activists targeted for protesting the coming war.

Gonzalez/SF Chronicle

San Francisco cop assaults antiwar protester on February 16 in police crackdown on breakaway march.

The Partisan Defense Committee strongly protests the arrests of 46 antiwar demonstrators by the police on February 16. After over 200,000 people marched in opposition to the U.S. war against Iraq, a smaller march of around 1,500 gathered and was immediately surrounded by cops in riot gear. Once moving, the march was followed by mounted police officers who provocatively swung clubs at the demonstrators. At one intersection, police barricades boxed in protesters as cops on horseback charged the crowd. It was a day marked by police terror: protesters were viciously beaten and attacked, and dozens were later arrested.

Out of the over 40 protesters who were arrested, six originally faced multiple felony charges, now reduced to misdemeanors. One protester, Broderick Harrison, still faces two felony vandalism counts and another, Jack Bay, remains in county jail. With the spectre of the brutal "three strikes" initiative, these charges can only threaten a living death in prison if they dare protest again. The remaining protesters have only been "discharged," with the danger of having their charges refiled within a year. The cops and the courts are clearly using these charges as a precedent for prosecution against future antiwar protesters. We demand that all these charges be unconditionally dropped!

The repression against antiwar protesters is part of the government's "war on terror" aimed at criminalizing all those who oppose the rulers' bloody war against Iraq. In New York, the courts' attempt to ban the antiwar demonstration on February 15 shows how the U.S. government seeks to regiment the population into submission by outlawing *any* dissent. Despite these attempts, millions of people marched around the world expressing their opposition to the slaughter the U.S. government is planning in Iraq. ***Drop all the charges against the demonstrators! Free all the protesters now!***■

High School Students Take To the Streets Against War

Defying threats of suspension, expulsion and arrest, thousands of youth from some 400 colleges, high schools and middle schools across the country walked out on March 5 to protest the coming war on Iraq. The call for a student strike was taken up by youth in places like Avon, Indiana as well as in most major American cities and as far away as Spain and Australia. Organized around the demand "Books not bombs," the demonstrations were extremely youthful. At a New York rally, one sixth-grade speaker had to stand on a chair in order to be visible to the crowd; antiwar chants were adaptations of popular hip-hop songs and homemade signs read "Bush is dumb and so is war" and "Duct tape and plastic wrap for the administration." In Chicago, where Jesse Jackson Sr. was a featured speaker, our contingent chanted, "Remember Hiroshima, remember Vietnam, Democratic Party, we know which side you're on!", which elicited strong reactions and was picked up by others in the crowd.

School administrations worked in cahoots with the cops to discipline protesters. Some high school students in New York were expelled immediately upon walking out; others in Brooklyn were locked into their school to prevent them from participating. In L.A., students from the UCLA-affiliated high school who walked out were followed by a truancy officer, rounded up and returned to school in a school bus. In the Bay Area, the UC Berkeley administration is threatening disciplinary action against the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition for "obstruction or disruption of teaching." The police mobilized heavily across the country and arrested some protesters; in Oakland, black and Latino high school kids were shoved and hit by cops on motorcycles. We demand: ***Drop all charges now! Drop all disciplinary action against the students and student groups!***■

Farjeon/L.A. Indymedia

Youth in Los Angeles demonstrating against war.

Contingents...

(continued from page 12)

Afghanistan. Otherwise, the movement will close itself off." What this means in practice is unity with bourgeois elements whose interests are ***irreconcilably counterposed*** to those of working people and the oppressed. Imperialist war should be met not with the abandonment of struggle against the capitalist rulers, but its ***intensification***.

The Progressive Labor Party states that they aim to "shatter the illusions many have in liberal politicians and expose the opportunist 'left' serving the Democratic Party" (*Challenge*, 5 February). Yet these supposed fighters for communism not only steadfastly refuse to take a side in defense of Iraq, but cannot even bring themselves to defend the besieged Palestinian people! In the midst of the genocidal war of terror by the U.S.-backed Zionist rulers against the Palestinians, *Challenge* (22 May 2002) declares: "This is a dogfight among gangsters. Backing the little ones against the big ones merely helps the little ones get bigger." PL's grotesque refusal to defend the Palestinian and Iraqi people should leave no doubt that despite its flaming red rhetoric, in practice PL ***capitulates to the U.S. ruling class***. The right-wing Sharon regime could well be planning to expel Palestinians from the Occupied Territories under cover of an American war against Iraq. We say: Defend the Palestinian people! Troops out of the Occupied Territories!

We desperately need to build an internationalist revolutionary workers party like the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the multinational working class of Russia to power. Our motto must be: unity of the workers in struggle against capitalism—break with the capitalist class enemy and their pseudo-socialist assistants! Fight for international socialist revolution—join us!■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

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Alternate Mondays, 7 p.m.

March 17: **Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack!**

Socialism and the Struggle Against Imperialist War

BU School of Education, Room 212
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

April 8: **Socialism and War**

University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis, Room TBA
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

March 29: **Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

April 1: **For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Columbia University
306 Hamilton Hall
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

OAKLAND

Saturday, 4 p.m.

March 22: **Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War—Lessons of the 1917 Russian Revolution**

1634 Telegraph Avenue, 3rd floor
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

March 19: **National Chauvinism Is Poison to Class Struggle—For Quebec Independence!**

University of Toronto
Sidney Smith, Room 1088
100 St. George Street
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

Down With Anti-Communist Censorship!

What Is the ISO Afraid of?

After the Chicago Spartacus Youth Club published and distributed a leaflet protesting their threatened exclusion, the International Socialist Organization-dominated Campus Antiwar Network backed down and allowed us entry into their national conference where we argued our revolutionary program. We reprint that leaflet of February 14 below.

In a blatant act of political cowardice, the Chicago Student Antiwar Network (CSAWN) has threatened the Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) with exclusion from the upcoming Campus Antiwar Network National Conference. We received an e-mail on February 11 responding to our request for a literature table that stated "Given your organization's disruptive behavior at the CSAWN student teach-in on Feb. 1 at UIC, we will have to...decide if we would like your participation or not." So what's behind this threat of political censorship? The real author of this threatened exclusion is the Internationalist Socialist Organization (ISO), who everybody knows are the ones running CSAWN. And the "disruption" that has them so bent out of shape was simply that we put forward a revolutionary program as the only way to struggle against war, and exposed the ISO's liberal reformism as an obstacle to this fight.

The aim of the ISO is to build "the broadest possible antiwar movement" to better pressure U.S. imperialism to "do the right thing." That means unity with liberals, unity with the Democrats, unity with those who support the UN (sanctions and all), and virulent bureaucratic censorship of authentic Marxist politics that might get in their way. The ISO were the *real* disrupters at the UIC teach-in. At the workshop on military recruitment in high schools, a high school comrade of the SYC was shouted down by an ISO panelist who yelled "That's it! Out!" when our comrade mentioned the ISO. The chair then told her "If anyone says anything divisive, you will have to leave." Our comrade was attempting to describe a protest we organized against NATO's appearance at UIC while the bombs were raining on Afghanistan. The ISO boycotted our protest, preferring to go into the meeting of these butchers and ask "tough questions" like "What is the acceptable civilian body count in Afghanistan?" In other words, they seek to silence the communists but see fit to debate these criminals.

The ISO's much-vaunted vision of "unity" means subservience to the liberal "more humane" wing of the ruling class, such as during the previous Gulf War in 1991 when they endorsed a demonstration called by the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, which explicitly included demands supporting UN sanctions, which have since killed 1.5 million Iraqis. Today the ISO is again ready to build a "movement" with the enemies of workers and minorities. Such a class-collaborationist "movement" is not only powerless to prevent war, but is actually an *obstacle* to real antiwar struggle because it serves in its own way to uphold the system which breeds war. War is a symptom of the irreconcilable interests and conflicts of capitalism, and it is ludicrous to believe that the fight against war can be divorced from the class struggle as a whole. To struggle against war it is necessary to fight against capitalism itself—for workers revolution! It is necessary to break the illusion of "national unity" and bring workers to understand that they share *no* interests with their capitalist bosses. The same imperialist rulers who are preparing to rain bombs on Iraq have been waging war on immigrants, black people and labor here at home. In the coming war, the working class has a side to take with the semicolonial people of Iraq against the U.S. imperialists. Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. imperialism!

The ISO's pretense to "socialism" or "anti-imperialism," is a total fraud considering that they capitulated to the imperialists down the line in their drive to destroy the Soviet Union. While bureaucratically degenerated, the USSR was a workers state, based on socialized property that represented real gains for the working class internationally. But the ISO howled with the imperialist wolves in opposing the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan against the CIA-backed woman-hating *mujahedin* (who they even hailed as "freedom fighters"). And the ISO hailed the Yeltsin/Bush counterrevolution in the USSR, writing, "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991). The peoples of the decimated nations of Russia and Eastern Europe aren't rejoicing today, but the imperialist bosses sure are. Defend the remaining deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba!

Anyone who knows the ISO knows that political censorship of leftists is nothing new for them. In one outrageous incident, back in March 1991 when Bush Sr. was waging the first Gulf War, they organized a conference of the National Network of Campuses Against the War. The ISO expelled the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) for "disruption" when they simply tried to raise a list of radical-sounding demands for adoption by the conference. They then called the campus cops to remove the RWL, and "anyone who defends them," including the SYC. Cops are the hired guns of the profit system, and "serve and protect" nothing but the racist capitalist status quo.

February 15 antiwar protest in New York. While ISO seeks to pressure imperialists to change priorities (sign at left), SYC fights for perspective of shattering imperialist order.

While the ISO wants to dress the blood-drenched imperialist wolves in sheep's clothing, we have something different in mind. As the youth group of the Spartacist League, the SYC calls for breaking with the racist, war-mongering Democrats and Republicans. We seek to win youth to the perspective of building a workers party that fights for socialist revolution!■

British SWP Says: Join "Stop the War" or We'll Shoot You!

The following leaflet was issued on March 1 by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

The "Revolution 2003" teach-in at LSE [London School of Economics] organised by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) this weekend featured self-appointed SWP thought police dispatching goon squads to harass the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Group and to impede the public from access to our revolutionary Marxist views. Inside the teach-in, the threats escalated after floor interventions by two young women supporters of the Spartacist League, who argued that opposition to the Iraq war and its domestic repercussions in the anti-Muslim witchhunt requires opposition to the Labour government, and exposed the SWP's support to Islamic fundamentalism, as well as its earlier support to the dispatch of British troops to Northern Ireland under a Labour government. In response, SWP honcho Chris Bambery fumed that anyone who doesn't politically support the Stop the War Coalition "*deserves a bullet in the head.*" This is the real face of the SWP's "give peace a chance" coalition-building: you've got to silence the reds to get workers and youth to lie down like lambs with the wolves of the Labour Party whilst they wage war on Iraq and against working people at home!

Physical exclusion, political censorship and threats of violence are the despicable acts of political cowards who disdain to debate their views, preferring to substitute the fist for the brain. Today it's the Spartacist League, but who's next on the SWP's hit list? *We call on all leftists, trade unionists and anti-war activists to condemn and protest this flagrant incitement to violence against revolutionary socialists!*

What's got Bambery's knickers in a twist? The SWP must be undergoing uncomfortable contortions to present themselves as socialists while maintaining loyalty to Blair's Labour Party (whose election sent the SWP "over the moon"). In our interventions and in discussions with young militants before the meeting our comrades also warned that by promoting politicians like George Galloway and Jeremy Corbyn—who are actively campaigning for antiwar activists to join the Labour Party—the SWP and the Stop the War Coalition are helping channel the growing anger against Blair's government and its war back into the reformist confines of the Labour Party. As Lenin wrote in *Socialism and War*, "*unity* with the opportunists *actually* means subordinating the working class to their 'own' national bourgeoisie...it means *splitting* the revolutionary proletariat of all countries." We Spartacists fly under our own banners and argue that what working people, youth and minorities in Britain today need is not a swivel chair "regime change" of Gordon Brown for Tony Blair, but the construction of a multiethnic revolutionary workers party to sweep away the capitalist system which breeds racism, war and unemployment. Anything less, anything other, is nothing but a reformist balm on the raw rubs of the capitalist order.

Political debate is vital to clarify what programme and leadership the working class needs to fight for its interests. This is not the first time that the SWP has resorted to political exclusionism or thuggery against the Spartacist League or other tendencies in the workers movement. In July 1980 they went berserk and assaulted SL supporters shortly after the Soviet Red Army went into Afghanistan because we exposed the SWP for attacking Margaret Thatcher *from the right* for selling British beef to Soviet troops in Kabul. We said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and later denounced Gorbachev's treacherous withdrawal from that country. Had the Soviets stayed and won, there wouldn't be a Gulf War today!

We say that workers and minorities in Britain and the toiling masses of neocolonial Iraq have a common enemy in the war-crazed gangs running the White House and 10 Downing Street and a common interest in defending Iraq against U.S./British attack without giving one iota of political support to Saddam Hussein's anti-worker capitalist regime. Imperialist wars such as the threatened slaughter of thousands of Iraqis are inherent to the system of capitalism, and to put an end to them what is needed is an international succession of socialist revolutions. For that purpose we say workers in this country need not a "reclaimed" Labour Party, but a multiethnic revolutionary workers party modelled on the Russian Bolshevik Party. It was the Bolshevik Party that, by successfully tearing the working class away from the pro-capitalist Corbyns, Galloways and Bamberys of the time, led the working class to power and took Russia out of the massacre of World War I through the 1917 October Revolution.

Like the Bolsheviks, we seek to win the working class and the oppressed to the revolutionary socialist programme through the open clash of opposing political programmes; be it at mobilisations such as the massive demonstration held in London on 15 February, in the trade unions, through electoral campaigns, through united-front actions in defence of the interests of workers and the oppressed, or at political meetings such as today's "Revolution 2003" teach-in. *Protest SWP political exclusionism and threats of violence! For open political debate!* ■

Defend Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

Sharon's cabinet ministers, recently ranted of the Palestinians: "Make their life so hitter that they will transfer themselves willingly." And this is exactly what the Zionist rulers have been trying to do with the daily massacres of Palestinians and escalating destruction of homes and entire neighborhoods. Antiwar protesters must take up the call to *defend the Palestinian people* and demand: *All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories!*

In the U.S. war against Iraq, we take a side. We call on the international proletariat to stand for the military defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every class-conscious worker, every fighter against capitalist exploitation and imperialist subjugation cannot but wish to see U.S. imperialism humiliated in Iraq. The colossal military advantage of the United States against semicolonial Iraq underscores the importance of *class struggle*, particularly in the imperialist centers, as the chief means to give content to the call to defend Iraq. We look to an extension and deepening of the sorts of labor actions, including blockades of military goods destined for the Gulf, taken by workers in Italy.

The U.S. drive for war has generated huge waves of worldwide protests, including the mobilization of millions of demonstrators on the weekend of February 15, and further large-scale protest actions are planned for the weekend of March 15. The Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues are organizing Revolutionary Internationalist contingents in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago based on the demands: *All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!*

The Workers World Party, which politically dominates the International ANSWER coalition that has organized many of the antiwar protests, has been redbaited by liberals for its statements against imperialism, particularly its solidarity with North Korea. These anti-Communist attacks notwithstanding, Workers World are hardly reds. Through ANSWER, Workers World peddles a program of liberal pacifism that never challenges the capitalist system that breeds war, the better to draw in "antiwar" Democratic Party politicians like Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton and Cynthia McKinney. To build an antiwar movement with bourgeois politicians is to build an antiwar movement with the very forces in whose interest imperialist war is waged. Indeed, even those Democrats who for now oppose a war against Iraq attack Bush from the right when it comes to North Korea, demanding a more aggressive line against that country.

In motivating antiwar activists to join our contingents, our mobilizing leaflet (see page 12) declares: "March with the proletarian internationalist revolutionists who tell the truth to the masses: that only socialist revolution can end imperialist war."

DPA

Lee/NY Times

Left: Kurds slaughtered by Turkish troops. Right: Kurdish demonstrators in northern Iraq burn Turkish flag last month to protest threatened Turkish invasion as part of U.S. war.

A New World Disorder

The sharp clash between the U.S. and Britain on one side and France, Germany and Russia on the other signals the undoing of the post-World War II imperialist order, which was premised on American hegemony and opposition to the Soviet Union. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the U.S. has asserted its overwhelming military superiority in a "one-superpower world."

This was made manifest last year. Months after the Pentagon released its "Nuclear Posture Review" explicitly allowing for a U.S. nuclear first strike, the Bush administration came out with its "National Security Strategy," affirming a general policy of "pre-emptive" war and asserting that the U.S. is "strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States." Such threats are directed not only against small "rogue" states but ultimately at the Chinese deformed workers state and the U.S.'s imperialist rivals.

While the Bush administration is particularly bellicose in both its rhetoric and actions, U.S. imperialism has been moving toward such unilateralist policies since the end of the Cold War. As it launched a "pre-emptive" war against Serbia in 1999, the Democratic Clinton White House explicitly refused to seek UN approval. Yet all the European Union powers endorsed that war. A big difference today is that where Clinton invoked the facade of multilateralism and "human rights," the Bush administration has dispensed with these diplomatic niceties, arrogantly and provocatively flaunting American military muscle.

During its existence, the USSR acted as a counterweight to U.S. imperialism, including through its large nuclear arsenal. It was the planned, collectivized economy issuing out of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution which, despite the subsequent Stalinist degeneration of the workers state, allowed once-backward Russia to become the second most powerful state on the planet. In fighting to the bitter end against capitalist counterrevolution, we warned that the demise of the USSR would lead to a far more dangerous world.

Capitalist restoration has led Russia to a catastrophic economic and social decline unprecedented in the history of any modern, industrialized country. By every measure of human progress—infant mortality, life expectancy, income, literacy—the diverse peoples of the former Soviet Union have been brutally hurled back. Nonetheless, Russia's new capitalist rulers inherited from the USSR a powerful nuclear arsenal and strong conventional armed forces. An alliance between the economic and technological resources of Germany—the dominant power in

North Korea...

(continued from page 1)

"Nuclear Posture Review" that openly targets that country along with China, Iraq and others for a potential nuclear first strike. The North Koreans are well aware that following a U.S. devastation of Iraq, they could be next on Washington's hit list. In today's world, where the nuclear madmen in Washington declare their "right" to carry out "pre-emptive" strikes against anyone at any time, the only real measure of sovereignty left is possession of nukes. Indeed, we regret that North Korea's current facilities for nuclear development are so modest.

It is telling that while the Bush administration is gearing up to devastate Iraq, those Democrats who claim to oppose the Iraq war are pointing to North Korea as the real "threat." While the organizers of the antiwar protests have sought to appeal to these Democrats, as revolutionary opponents of our "own" imperialist ruling class—Republicans and Democrats alike—we have raised the necessity of defense of North Korea in our interventions into the antiwar protests.

The American military presence in the Korean peninsula is not only aimed at the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states, but is an assertion of U.S. interests in the region against potential rivals, chiefly Japan. It also serves as a warning to South Korea's combative union movement, threatening to drown in blood any challenge to the capitalist order. Indeed, in South Korea, popular fear and hatred of the U.S. occupation forces is escalating, with huge protests in the South against U.S. troops and bases.

Meanwhile, in China, the Stalinist bureaucracy has repeatedly emphasized its agreement with the imperialists' demands for a "non-nuclear Korean peninsula." Such criminal appeasement simply emboldens the rapacious U.S. imperialists to foment counterrevolution in China itself.

Despite the rule of a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, the overthrow of capitalism in North Korea was a historic defeat for imperialism and a victory for the working people of Asia and the world. Following the Korean War, U.S. imperialism has not only militarily encircled the North but has also sought to starve the country through an economic embargo. The collapse in 1991-92 of the Soviet Union, which provided the bulk of military and technical aid to North Korea, created a dire situation, made worse by a series of natural disasters producing a famine of historic proportions. These desperate conditions have been compounded by the extreme autarky pushed by the North Korean bureaucracy under the rubric of *Juche* (self-reliance). Today, North Korea is ruled by a particularly cultish, nepotistic and bizarre Stalinist regime centered on "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il.

The only road forward for the beleaguered masses of the North is through the perspective of international socialist revolution. As we wrote in "U.S. Imperialism Hands Off North Korea!" (*WV* No. 795, 17 January):

> "What is desperatety needed is the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for the *revolutionary reunification of Korea*—for socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats in the North. The fight for revolutionary reunification must be linked to the struggle for proletarian political revolution in China and the extension of proletarian power to Japan, the industrial heartland of Asia."

Defend North Korea! All U.S. troops out of Korea now! ■

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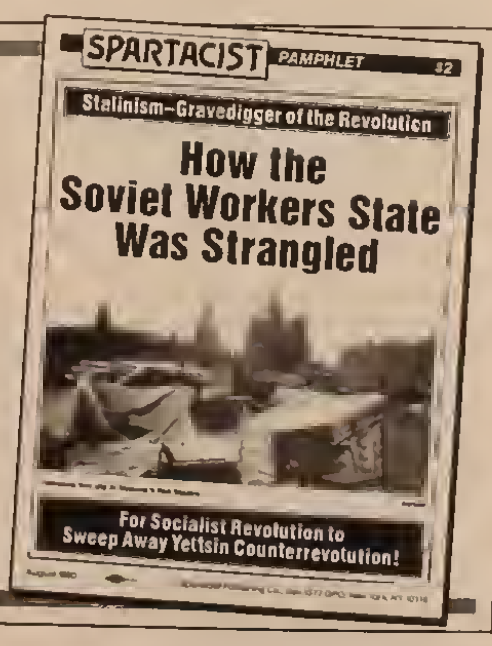
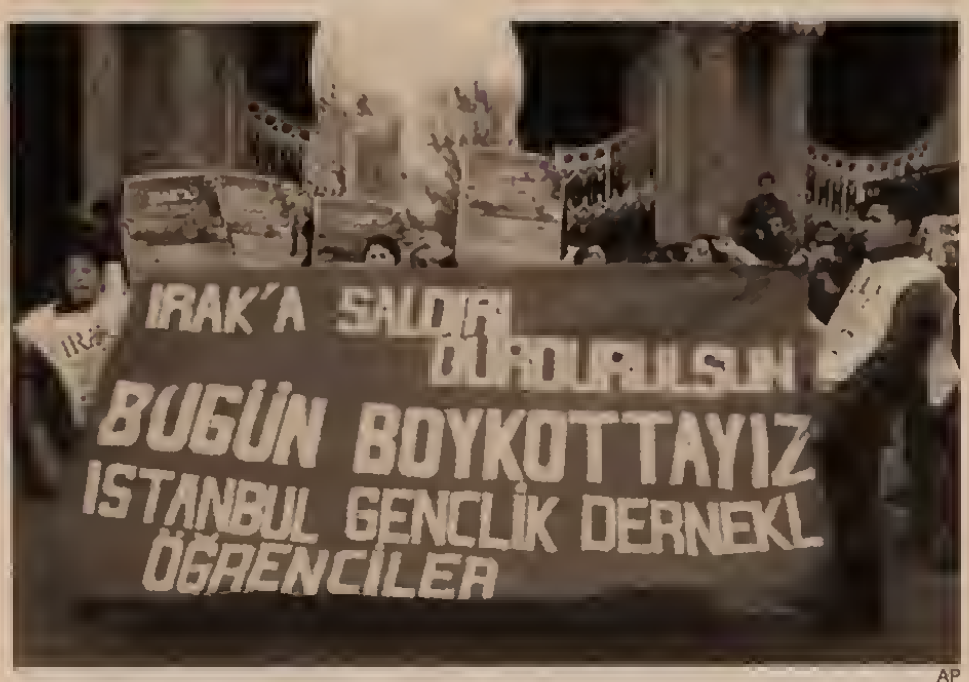


Europe—and Russia's military potential would create a formidable challenge to American global dominance.

Many antiwar activists have looked to the UN as a potential force to rein in the U.S. Don't be fooled! Today, growing sections of the American ruling class, particularly as represented in the Bush administration, see no further use for the UN. But the UN has been a creature of the imperialist powers, centrally the U.S., since its formation at the end of World War II. It has always served as a fig leaf for imperialist wars and interventions. It is enough to recall that the sanctions that have killed 1.5 million Iraqis and devastated one of the most advanced infrastructures in the Near East were carried out under UN aegis. Today, it is the UN that is vindictively disarming Iraq on the eve of an American invasion, as seen by the weapons inspections and the order to destroy Iraq's Al Samoud missiles, which can barely reach 100 miles.

For Proletarian Internationalism!

Throughout Europe, the mass antiwar protests against the U.S. war are being channeled in the national-chauvinist direction of getting one's "own" rulers to stand up to American imperialism. But as we explained in a 23 October 2002 International Communist League statement, which has been translated into eight languages and distributed internationally: "What's essential is to draw a class line and unshackle the working people and anti-imperialist youth from bourgeois politicians, their agents in the trade unions and their left servants, who seek to channel justified hatred of war into illusory calls for parliamentary reforms of the profit-driven system that breeds war and, in West Europe, into support for their own national bourgeoisie against the Americans."



AP

March 4: Protesters at Turkey's Istanbul University carry banner reading "Stop the Attack on Iraq."

In Britain, this reformist strategy takes the form of the "Stop the War" coalition, dominated by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which is supported by virtually every reformist and centrist outfit as well as oppositional sections of the Labour Party and trade-union bureaucrats. In Italy, where the right-wing Berlusconi regime is backing the U.S., Rifondazione Comunista (RC) has latched onto the French/German opposition to the war to paint the European bourgeoisies as more "humanitarian" than the Americans, declaring in a headline: "Paris-Berlin, the Axis of Peace" (*Liberazione*, 23 January).

As opposition to the war has deepened at the base of European society, there have been a growing number of actions carried out by trade unionists. In January, Scottish train drivers refused to drive a trainload of munitions destined for a large NATO base. In Italy, on February 21 trade unionists and antiwar activists blocked railway lines being used to transport 26 military convoys from the Camp Ederle NATO base in Vicenza to the Camp Darby NATO logistics depot in Livorno, one of the largest ammunition depots in Europe (see "Italian Workers Block Arms Shipments," *WV* No. 798, 28 February). Such labor actions have continued on a near-daily basis, including blockades of barracks and NATO bases by public sector workers. Three days ago, over 50,000 protesters, with trade-union contingents at their head, surrounded Camp Darby and broke through the perimeter fence at least twice. Now, port workers in Livorno are threatening to go on strike against the loading of military supplies on American vessels bound for the Gulf.

The centrist British Workers Power group—whose radical phrasemongering in cyberspace is matched by its craven opportunism in reality—has seized on increasing labor opposition to the war in Europe to raise the call for a "Global General Strike." When the centrist Independent Labour Party (ILP) called for a general strike against war in 1935, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky replied in "The ILP and the Fourth International": "It is comparatively easy to take a 'revolutionary' position on the question of war; but it is extremely difficult to draw from this position *all the necessary theoretical and practical conclusions*." Trotsky went on to note: "A general strike can be put on the agenda as a method of struggle against mobilization and war only in the event that the entire preceding developments in the country have placed revolution and armed insurrection on the agenda," and added: "A general strike without a victorious insurrection cannot 'stop war'."

Workers Power spews hot air about a general strike encompassing every country on the planet. But a general strike poses the question of which class shall rule. And for that to be resolved in favor of the proletariat, what's needed is a Leninist-Trotskyist party that fights for the class independence of the working class. Such a party can only be built by splitting Labour's working-class base away from the social-democratic tops, including and particularly those who pose as "left." And this is precisely what Workers Power rejects.

Workers Power's practical conclusion is to seek to chain left-wing youth and workers to "left" Labour Members of Parliament (MPs) like Jeremy Corbyn and George Galloway, who are currently campaigning to "reclaim" the Labour Party from Blair and turn it into a "party for peace." In the same article that calls for a "Global General Strike," Workers Power declares: "We can, and must, march alongside the reformist left MPs and union leaders when they mobilise their organisations for action but we do not have to trim our strategy to what they will tolerate. If we did that, then the militant left wing of this movement would not grow and the compromising right wing would not lose its influence over it, which is just what is needed" (*Workers Power Global Week*, 23 February). For Workers Power, which is a member of the "Stop the War" coalition, this means in practice unity with the likes of Corbyn and Galloway. Such unity amounts to keeping the working class subordinated to racist, pro-imperialist Labourism and thus to its "own" national bourgeoisie; it means *splitting* the international workers movement along national lines.

Dario Orlandi/Indymedia

Demonstrators in Italy occupy train tracks to stop transport of war matériel. Banner reads, "Against the Capitalist War: General Strike."

In fact, only a few months earlier, Workers Power joined in an explicit appeal to the very European governments against which labor strikes would be directed. Last fall, Workers Power co-signed a call with RC, the SWP, the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and others appealing to the European bourgeois rulers to oppose U.S. imperialism: "We call on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans" (reprinted in *Weekly Worker*, 12 September 2002).

Unlike Workers Power, which issues meaningless proclamations for a "Global General Strike," Marxists seek to intervene into labor actions against the impending war to raise the consciousness of the proletariat to the understanding that it has the power to get rid of the system of capitalist exploitation and imperialist plunder through socialist revolution. Militants engaged in actions against the war should broaden this into a struggle against capitalism itself.

For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

Bush proclaims that U.S. imperialism plans to go into Iraq as "liberators." Such arrogant claims are not new. When the British army marched into Baghdad in 1917, the commanding general declared: "Our armies do not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies but as liberators." The British imperialists, in league with France, then proceeded to draw artificial boundaries in the former lands of the Ottoman Empire in the Near East, forcibly amalgamating disparate ethnic populations while carving up others, notably the Kurds who are divided among Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. As a result of this criminal imperialist legacy, the Kurds continue to be the largest nation in the world without a state of their own.

The American bourgeois media has trumpeted the supposed "liberation" of Kurds in the "autonomous" region of northern Iraq, created after the 1991 Gulf War. But as noted by Dilip Hiro in *Iraq: In the Eye of the Storm* (2002), the U.S. "refused to help the quasi-independent Kurdistan graduate to an independent state while vetoing the region's return to Baghdad's jurisdiction. All it wanted was to deploy the Kurds as a lever to keep Saddam down."

The chief benefactors of the imperialist carve-up of Iraq have been smugglers and black marketeers, working in cahoots with either the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) or the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), each of which took control of sections of Iraqi Kurdistan. For decades, these two nationalist formations have engaged in bloody internecine feuding, alternately lining up with one or another imperialist or regional power, including the U.S., Israel, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. Until reaching a truce some years ago, the PUK and KDP fought a civil war following the Gulf War—killing some 7,000 people—with the latter appealing for and receiving arms from none other than Saddam Hussein himself.

Now the U.S. war is being seized on by the regional oppressors of the Kurds to move into oil-rich northern Iraq and smash any semblance of Kurdish autonomy. An American occupation of Iraq—with its ethnically diverse population and long-established civil society—would set the stage for further internecine conflicts and brutal imperialist repression, and could turn the whole region into a hornet's nest. The U.S. has already made it clear that its forces will take control of the oil fields around Kirkuk. The Turkish army—infamous for its brutal suppression of Kurds in Turkey—already has some 1,200 troops in northern Iraq and is planning on deploying thousands more. Tens of thousands of Iraqi Kurds have demonstrated against and vowed to militarily resist a Turkish incursion. For its part, Iran has already sent hundreds of

continued on page 10

AP

Paris, March 5: Foreign ministers Ivanov of Russia, de Villepin of France and Fischer of Germany announce intent to block UN resolution authorizing war.

New York TWU: Fight MTA Attacks on Muslim Women Workers!

As the U.S. rulers continue their anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim repression under the rubric of the "war on terror," the racist hosses who run New York City's Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) have victimized three black women bus drivers for wearing the Islamic headscarf. These workers, all of whom work out of the Flatbush depot in Brooklyn, have been subjected to company discipline and are threatened with losing their jobs merely for refusing to cover their headdresses with official MTA caps.

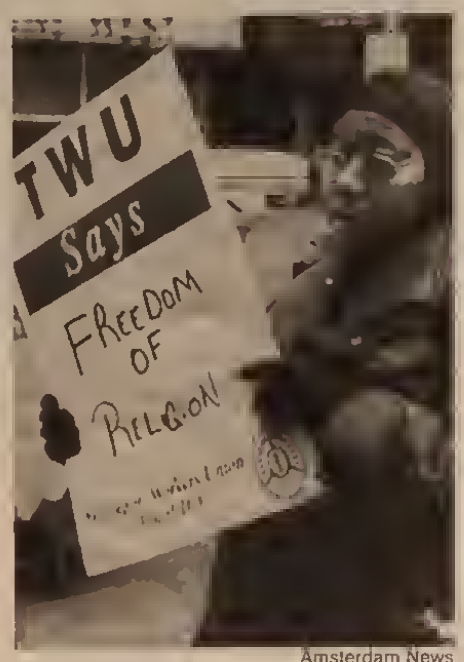
The MTA's outrageous trampling of these workers' rights began last summer, when a probationary bus driver, Malikah Alkebulan, was written up for refusing to cover up her scarf, known as a *khimar* or *hijab*. Management then went after veteran bus drivers Stephanie Lewis and Deirdre Small, who have worn such headscarves at work for 14 and 6 years respectively. All three women have been pulled from passenger service and punitively reassigned to garage duty and face continual company harassment for defending their rights.

These women are not helpless victims but are members of a powerful union, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, which has the ability to mobilize its many thousands of members in their defense. This attack on union workers is an attack on the whole labor movement—an injury to one is an injury to all! ***TWU Local 100 must mobilize to put a stop to this racist and anti-Muslim bigotry and demand that all three women be immediately restored to possenger service with their records wiped clean!***

It is scandalous that the Local 100 leadership is only now publicizing this case. Having filed grievances on behalf of the women, which were denied, the TWU then submitted the case for arbitration on February 28 and held a small "arbitration rally" outside, with a ruling due March 30. The union tops kept this case quiet during contract negotiations late last year, when transit workers voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike that could have shut down the whole city. Local 100 president Roger Toussaint averted such a showdown by pushing through a deeply unpopular contract deal with a series of concessions. Among these are "reformed" disciplinary procedures which, far from helping workers ensnared in the company's draconian disciplinary process, in fact streamline the MTA's ability to victimize and fire workers.

In a leaflet on the case that did not receive wide circulation, the Local 100 bureaucracy claims that the discrimination the women face is "un-American." In fact, bigotry and discrimination against Muslims and other minorities are facts of life in racist capitalist America. We defend the right to freedom of religious beliefs. At the same time, as Marxists, we recognize that the headscarf prescribed by the Koran—most obviously in its extreme forms, like the head-to-toe *chador* in Iran and the *burqa* in Afghanistan—is an expression of the subjugation of women, who are oppressed by *all* religions. But in post-9/11 America, it's the capitalists and their government that are making life hell for all Muslims, including women.

The domestic "war on terror" that in the first instance targets immigrants and Muslims will be used against just about everyone perceived as an opponent by the capitalist rulers—from those who oppose U.S. imperialist wars abroad to those who speak out against racist oppression. The ultimate target of laws such as the U.S. Patriot and Homeland Security Acts is the labor movement, the real "enemy within" in the eyes of the capitalist rulers. It is crucial for the unions to use their social power in defense of immigrants and all those facing racist discrimination.



Amsterdam News

February 28: Stephanie Lewis, one of three NYC bus drivers victimized for wearing Islamic headscarf, at union protest at arbitration hearing.

Defend Iraq...

(continued from page 9)

troops into both the southern Shi'ite region of Iraq as well as the Kurdish north. What all the regional bourgeoisies, as well as all the imperialist powers, do not want to see is the creation of any independent Kurdish state, which would challenge the stability of the bourgeois order in the Near East.

This underscores that any struggle for Kurdish national liberation must be based on implacable opposition to imperialism. In channeling Kurdish hostility to the regime in Baghdad into the arms of the American imperialist invaders, the Kurdish nationalist parties are preparing yet another bloody betrayal of this long-suffering people. It is only through the overthrow of capitalist rule in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey—establishing a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan—that the Kurdish people can finally realize national self-determination. As we wrote in our greetings to a 1984 conference of Kurdish militants in Europe (reprinted in *WV* No. 362, 14 September 1984):

> "The Kurdish masses must look to an alliance with the Arab, Persian and Turkish proletariats, who in turn must be made to become determined champions of the Kurdish right of self-determination against the great power chauvinism of their own bourgeoisies. The Bolsheviks led the Russian labouring masses to realise that they could never become free without resolute struggle against Great Russian chauvinism. Such a revolutionary party must be built in each state and become the weapon for leading the proletarian and peasant masses to victory and in consequence to encourage such victory elsewhere."

This struggle must be linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. In Germany, for example, Kurdish and Turkish workers form a strategic component of the proletariat and face the same racist and anti-immigrant measures at the hands of the governments of "Fortress Europe."

Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War!

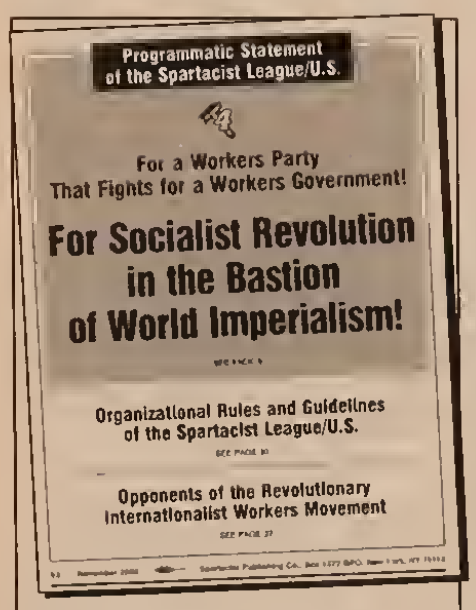
When Iraq had a mass Communist party in the 1950s, there was a real opportunity for the liberation of the Kurds as well as the other exploited and oppressed peoples of Iraq. But that was ruthlessly suppressed with the connivance of U.S. imperialism. Today, the U.S. denounces Saddam Hussein as a "tyrant" and a "Hitler," but when he and his Ba'athist predecessors were butchering Communists, Kurds and others, Washington fully supported him. In 1958, as the British-backed monarchy was overthrown in a military coup, the powerful Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) could have seized power at the head of the millions of workers, Kurds and other minorities that supported it. That opportunity was derailed as the ICP's patrons in the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy cut a deal with the American imperialists and the ICP leadership lent its support to the bourgeois-nationalist officers. This prepared the way for a counterrevolutionary bloodbath in 1963, when the Ba'ath party briefly came to power for the first time and rounded up and murdered some 5,000 leftists and trade unionists on the basis of lists supplied by the CIA.

Saddam Hussein's bloody history as a butcher of Iraqi leftists and minorities in the service of the imperialists underlines why our military defense of Iraq must be based on the sharpest political opposition to the bourgeois order in Iraq. It is the task of the Iraqi proletariat to sweep away this brutal capitalist regime. The key lesson of the 1958-59 uprising is the need for a Marxist party based on the complete class independence of the proletariat from all manner of bourgeois nationalism.

The Bush administration is making it amply clear that American imperialism is the deadliest enemy of all the peoples of the world. An easy win for the U.S. in Iraq will only embolden this war-crazed government to embark on even bloodier military adventures elsewhere. The Bush administration is already ominously talking about a supposed nuclear "threat" from Iran, another member of Bush's "axis of evil."

But contrary to those reformists who look to French and German imperialism, there are no "benign" imperialist powers. Striving for domination, for new markets, resources and cheap labor inevitably leads to war. France and Germany—whose interests by no means always coincide—are less powerful than the U.S., but hardly less bloody. Following the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1990, an increasingly assertive German imperialism precipitated the breakup of Yugoslavia by backing Croatian secession in 1991, leading to a series of ethnic civil wars and imperialist attacks that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and drove millions from their homes. French imperialism today has an occupation force in its Ivory Coast neocolony in West Africa and in the early '90s actively backed the Hutu-based regime in Rwanda, which carried out a genocidal massacre of over 800,000 ethnic Tutsis in 1994.

Only a series of socialist revolutions can prevent the world from being thrown into the barbarism of interimperialist wars. The new generation of fighters today being mobilized against imperialist war must understand that any genuine opposition to war must be based on independent struggle of the working class against the capitalist system that breeds racism and war. A struggle against war and against national and racial oppression requires a proletarian revolutionary internationalist party to fight for socialist revolution. ■



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Near East...

(continued from page 5)

driving out the fascists and setting up a collectivized economy put a stop to national violence within Yugoslavia. The ending of pogroms and murderous national conflicts was a historic achievement of the Yugoslav revolution that overthrew capitalism. At the same time, the conservative, nationally limited Stalinist bureaucracy pursued policies, like so-called "market socialism," that constantly undermined the very gains of the revolution and inspired national conflicts. As capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the Yugoslav deformed workers state, it once again became engulfed in ethnic warfare and forced population transfers.

The other historic example is, of course, the Russian Revolution of 1917. To take just one example: the Caucasus, like the Balkans, had been for centuries a region of inter-ethnic conflicts. The Bolsheviks not only granted nations the right to self-determination, to create independent states in the region, but they developed a whole range of organizational solutions so that even tiny proto-national groupings, sometimes consisting of only a few villages, could have a measure of local autonomy. I once saw a map of the Caucasus in the early years of Bolshevik rule showing all the administrative organs. It was covered with little circles of various sizes. There too, the revolution put a stop to ethnic warfare and essentially took the national question off the agenda. These two examples are dramatic proof of how murderous national conflicts that seem unresolvable under capitalism can be equitably addressed under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Anti-Semitism Binds the Masses to Their Exploiters

Our strategy for the Near East is the seizure of state power by proletarian revolution. That is not going to happen unless the Hebrew-speaking working class is in large part won over or at least neutralized. Think about it for a minute. Israel is by far the most advanced and powerful country in the region. The Zionists have the technology, the arms; they have nuclear weapons. How are you going to make a revolution in the region if you don't crack the Zionist citadel from within? You have to be realistic about this. And you are definitely not going to win Hebrew-speaking workers if you don't recognize their right to national existence. In addition, if you don't have this perspective, you are inevitably going to end up looking to the Arab bourgeoisies. Who else could even pretend to be a useful ally of the Palestinians against the Zionists? The European Union? Or maybe "la belle France" of the Algerian War and of Vigipirate anti-immigrant repression?

To write off the Hebrew-speaking working class as hopelessly reactionary is not fundamentally different from what Third World nationalists say about the working class in all advanced capitalist countries—that they are hopelessly linked to their bourgeoisie because they profit from imperialist exploitation of the Third World. This view of the Hebrew-speaking working class expresses a brand of despair. And it is easy to despair about this situation. There are certainly not many cracks in the Zionist citadel today, even as the Zionist rulers openly copy the methods of the Nazis in the Occupied Territories. The political climate is so right-wing that Sharon, the butcher of Sabra and Shatila, can pass himself off as a "centrist." This is not a situation that provides many openings for doing something in the immediate sense to relieve the situation of the Palestinians. And that is a special kind of hell for revolutionaries, not to have any openings for intervening effectively. In the Arab countries today, what's on the rise is not communism but Islamic fundamentalism, and this is a product of despair.

But if you go back to the 1940s and '50s, you had large Communist parties in many Arab countries. Most of these CPs were either formed by, or were based heavily on, minorities in those countries. The various Egyptian communist groups were all formed by Egyptian Jews. The Iraqi CP had Kurds and Jews in its leadership. This is a tradition that we can hark back to. But how are we going to win Arab workers to communism? Only by directly confronting the false consciousness that binds them to their oppressors.

I want to underline the fact that raising the consciousness of the proletariat means a lot more than fighting to defend the workers' material interests. In *What Is To Be Done?*, Lenin said that the revolutionary party must be a "*tribune of the people*," the defender of all the oppressed, not just the working class. That means defending the rights of the Kurds, the Berbers, the Saharan population, the Copts. It means fighting for free abortion on demand. It means defending the rights of homosexuals against backwardness and religious and moralistic bigotry. And it means fighting anti-Semitism, which is rampant in the Arab countries.

And it is *rampant*. Usually the word "Zionist" is used instead of "Jew," but the centuries-old anti-Semitic themes are there: the Jews plotting world domination, the Jews as the embodiment of all evil, and so on. You probably saw reports last month of a TV series in Egypt based on the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the anti-Semitic forgery cooked up by the Tsarist secret police to incite pogroms. The *Protocols* are everywhere in the Near East. They have been endorsed and even distributed by Arab leaders, from Nasser to the King of Saudi Arabia. Denying that the Holocaust existed, a theme also borrowed from the European fascists, is now common on campuses and among the Near East intelligentsia. Even the age-old anti-Semitic libel that Jews are killing Christian children to drink their blood is widely repeated by Arab leaders and academics in the Near East.

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

Tito's Communist Partisans transcended national antagonisms in Yugoslavia. Tito (center), who was from Croatia, pictured with Slovenian, Serbian and Montenegrin Communist leaders.

Mémoires Vives Productions

Henri Curiel, an Egyptian Jew, helped found Communist movement in that country in 1940s.

We insist on this not because we hope to recruit a lot of Jews in Arab countries—there are almost none left. It's because anti-Semitism propagated by Arab rulers is one of the main things poisoning the class consciousness of Arab workers. Similarly in Poland, we repeatedly published articles against anti-Semitism. In Poland there aren't many Jews left either. They were all driven out or exterminated. But anti-Semitism was key to the reactionary Polish nationalists of Solidarność who stood at the head of the working class.

The Bolsheviks devoted enormous energies to fighting anti-Semitism and defending the Russian Jews against attacks. Even in that case, the Bolsheviks did not expect to recruit large numbers of Jews, who worked mainly in small factories where they tended to gravitate toward the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks had their base in the large factories. But this was a litmus test in a country where anti-Jewish pogroms were a prevalent form of state-sponsored oppression.

For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

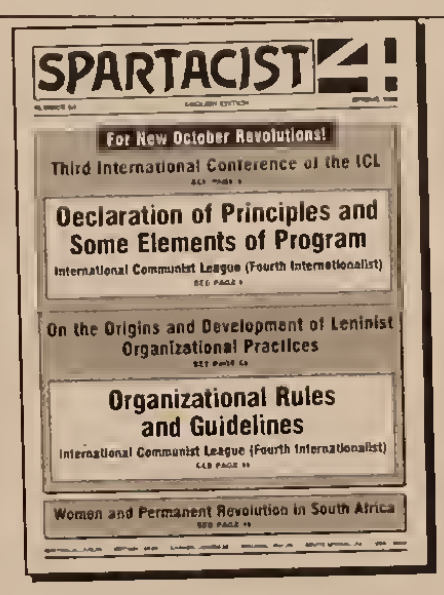
As I said, there is a rich tradition of working-class struggle in the Near East. I would like to conclude on the highest point of that tradition, the Iraqi revolution of 1958. That revolution was touched off by the overthrow of the monarchy by left-nationalist officers on Bastille Day 1958. The whole country rose up. As workers staged massive demonstrations in the cities, some numbering a million people, peasants staged insurrections throughout the countryside, killing landlords, seizing the land. The Iraqi CP had the overwhelming support of the multinational Iraqi working class. It also had broad support among other layers of the population, including within the army and even some sections of the officer corps. It is clear that the Iraqi CP could have taken power. The U.S. sent the Marines into Lebanon to be ready for a possible invasion of Iraq. Socialist revolution was on the agenda.

Isaac Deutscher, the historian and biographer of Trotsky, wrote: "Most western observers on the spot agreed that Kassem [the nationalist in power who had the support of the Stalinist Communist Party] could hardly hold his ground against an all-out communist offensive." But the Moscow Stalinists sold out the revolution in the interests of maintaining "peaceful coexistence" with the U.S. And the Iraqi CP, being a Stalinist party, went along, putting the brakes on the movement. This was the fruit of the Stalinist program of "two-stage revolution." While riding the crest of the revolutionary wave, the Iraqi CP continued to subordinate itself to the left-nationalist officer Kassem, in a supposedly "anti-imperialist" revolution. Of course the promised second stage of socialist revolution never came. Instead Kassem turned on the Iraqi CP. In 1963, the reactionary, nationalist Ba'ath party, which included Saddam Hussein (who was not yet a national leader), came to power and carried out a bloodbath of thousands of leftist workers using lists supplied by the CIA.

The Iraqi revolution held out enormous historic possibilities for workers of the Near East and for minorities like the Kurds. Imagine, if the Iraqi proletariat had taken power, how it would have changed workers' consciousness throughout the region. What would the impact have been on the Israeli proletariat? Obviously we can't tell; it depends on many things. But it is possible that the impact would have been—or will be some day in similar conditions—considerable. ■

University of California Press

Jewish quarter in Cairo prior to 1948 creation of Israeli state.



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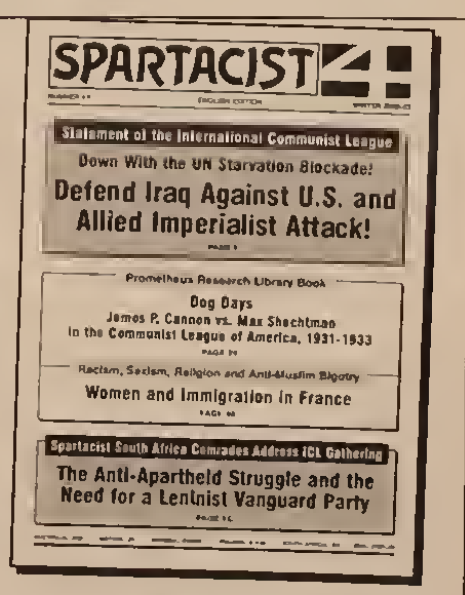

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WORKERS VANGUARD

March 15 Protests:

Join the Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents!

Young Spartacus

The following call was issued on March 7.

The U.S. imperialist rulers are about to unleash mass murder and destruction on Iraq followed by a direct colonial occupation of that country. The U.S. government aims to add tens of thousands of Iraqi corpses to the more than a million already produced by the last Gulf War and the deadly UN sanctions. This is intended as a bloody warning to the whole world, and particularly to Wall Street's most powerful economic and political rivals in Berlin and Tokyo: stand in the way of the U.S. capitalists and you will be crushed! This war is predatory and imperialist on the part of the U.S. but just and defensive on the part of Iraq. Working people and opponents of U.S. imperialism must take a side in defense of Iraq, without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime —*Defend Iraq!*

Young Spartacus

San Francisco, February 16: Spartacist/SYC-organized contingent at 200,000-strong antiwar rally stood out sharply from pro-Democratic Party politics of protest organizers.

The Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues call on those who oppose U.S. imperialism to join our revolutionary internationalist contingents in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and San Francisco on March 15, based on the demands: ***All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!*** March with the proletarian internationalist revolutionists who tell the truth to the masses: that only socialist revolution can end imperialist war!

Any blow against the U.S. imperialist military is a blow against the common enemy of the world's working class and oppressed. Especially given the overwhelming military superiority of U.S. forces, the chief means of defending Iraq is ***warking-class struggle ogoinst the U.S. copitolists at home.***

Imperialist war demands class peace. Workers, blacks and immigrants face an all-sided attack under the "war on terror," which is backed by the Republicans and Democrats alike. The fight against imperialist war abroad is part and parcel of the fight against the war on working people at home. It is necessary to struggle against the capitalist system of production for profit which is the root cause of war, exploitation and oppression. But the organizers of the mass antiwar protests are proceeding in ***the exact opposite direction***—turning these protests into platforms to garner votes and political support for a wing of the capitalist Democratic Party.

We are marching in counterposition to this program of "unity" with the upholders of the capitalist system, who oppose the war for now because they don't think it best serves the interests of rapacious U.S. imperialism. Such Democrats, along with the capitalist Green Party, posture as friends of the oppressed in order to better channel the discontent with this racist capitalist system back into dead-end electoral politics. We say: Break with the Democratic Party of racism and war! For a workers party that fights for socialist revolution!

The organizers of the demonstrations, such as the Workers World Party's ANSWER, the Revolutionary Communist Party's Not In Our Name (NION) and the United for Peace and Justice coalitions raise such calls as "No war on Iraq" and refuse to take a side in defense of Iraq. To do so would mean siding with the "enemy," a position that would preclude the participation of any purportedly antiwar wing of the bourgeoisie.

Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the 1917 Russian Revolution, argued against this class-collahorationist orientation in his "Declaration to the Antiwar Congress at Amsterdam" (July 1932):

> "To condemn war is easy; to overcome it is difficult. The struggle against war is a struggle against the classes which rule society and which hold in their hands both its productive forces and its destructive weapons. It is not possible to prevent war by moral indignation, by meetings, by resolutions, by newspaper articles, and by congresses. As long as the bourgeoisie has at its command the banks, the factories, the land, the press, and the state apparatus, it will always be able to drive the people to war when its interests demand it."

"Antiwar" bourgeois politicians push UN weapons inspections, and even the murderous UN sanctions which are themselves acts of war, as a supposed "alternative" to war. The UN is nothing other than a fig leaf for imperialist slaughter, from the 1950-53 Korean War which killed over three million people to the first Gulf War. Even with UN backing, this would be a predatory war by U.S. imperialism.

As a result of the destruction of the Soviet Union by capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, the U.S. imperialists now feel free to run roughshod over the planet. The Soviet Union was a degenerated workers state which, despite the rule of a nationalist bureaucracy, embodied enormous gains for the working people, women and national minorities as a result of the planned, collectivized economy. The USSR was the military and industrial powerhouse for every state that had overthrown capitalism, from Vietnam to Cuba. We fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution, and for a workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. Today we wage the same fight in defense of the remaining deformed workers states: ***Defend Narth Korea's right ta nuclear weapons! Defend China, Cuba and Vietnam!***

Most of today's pseudo-socialists *cheered* the destruction of the Soviet Union, after having supported just about every counterrevolutionary movement in the Soviet Bloc, from Polish Solidarność to Boris Yeltsin. The International Socialist Organization (ISO), Progressive Labor (PL), Revolutionary Communist Party and Socialist Action, who today refuse to take on their "own" bourgeoisie in defense of Iraq, sided with U.S. imperialism in its drive to destroy the homeland of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Just as the capitalists are driven to maximize profit by squeezing more from the workers for less, the most industrially advanced nations are driven to compete with each other over markets, raw materials and spheres of investment. This struggle leads to economic wars, which ultimately lead to shooting wars. And the destruction of the USSR has brought on increased interimperialist rivalries.

The *only* way that a future interimperialist war—like World War I and World War II—can be prevented is through *sacialist revolutions* that seize control of society's productive resources from the capitalists and reorganize society based on economic planning for social need rather than profit. Only the working class, whose collective labor produces all profit, has both the power and the objective interests to accomplish this task. The important actions already carried out by Scottish and Italian rail workers, blocking munitions shipments destined for U.S. and allied forces in the Near East, point the way forward for U.S. workers, who must take up the struggle here in the belly of the imperialist beast.

But it is impossible to mobilize such a struggle if opposition to the war is subordinated to a wing of the capitalist class. In the 1930s, then-Trotskyist James Burnham (John West) pointed out in *War and the Workers*:

> "To suppose...that revolutionists can work out a common 'program against war' with non-revolutionists is a fatal illusion. Any organization based upon such a program is not merely powerless to prevent war; in practice it acts to promote war, both because it serves in its own way to uphold the system that breeds war, and because it diverts the attention of its members from the real fight against war."

We say: for class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers! In contrast, the ISO publication *Socialist Worker Online* (22 November 2002) declares that "antiwar groups have to be open to anyone who opposes the Bush war drive," including people who might agree with "UN weapons inspections or even the U.S. war on

continued on page 6

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 800

28 March 2003

Down With U.S. Imperialism!
All U.S. and Allied Troops Out of the Near East Now!

Defend Iraq Against U.S./British Attack!

Statement of the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League/U.S.

MARCH 19—The rape of Iraq has begun. American missiles and bombs are slamming into Baghdad and southern Iraq, while an American and British invasion force is poised to move in from the south. The human cost in lost lives and displacement that the rapacious American capitalist class has in store for the long-suffering Iraqi people will be measured in the millions. This is nothing but a colonial war of naked imperialist aggression to be followed by a colonial occupation of this oil-rich Near Eastern country. The U.S. rulers prattle about bringing "democracy" and "liberation" to the Iraqi people—like the Zionists "liberated" the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. The gruesome devastation planned for Iraq is the true face of U.S. imperialism—wading in blood and dripping with filth, a roaring beast devastating culture and humanity.

It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe. The U.S.

continued on page 6

Baghdad set aflame by missile attack launched by U.S./British colonial invaders.

MARCH 25—All of Baghdad is now Ground Zero. Streets are littered with burning skeletons of buildings; bitter smoke and stench hang in the air. More cruise missiles and 2,000-pound "smart bombs" slammed into Baghdad and other cities in a matter of hours on Friday than in the whole six weeks of bombardment in the first Gulf War. The intended effect of this "Shock and Awe" blitzkrieg, according to one of its architects, is "rather like the nuclear weapons at Hiroshima." The city which gave birth to modern algebra in the ninth century is being razed to the ground by rulers with the mindset of "born again" biblical primitives and the technology of 21st-century industrial capitalism.

More than 100 civilians have been killed in Basra alone, where the population has been without water or electricity for over three days, and scores more in Baghdad and other cities. As one man in Nasiriya bitterly remarked after his son was dragged away from his home by American troops, "Is this your liberation?" Stray cruise missiles have already hit Iran and Turkey. A missile attack on a bridge at the Syrian border destroyed a bus, killing five Syrians. Reporting on a hospital ward filled with civilian casualties in Baghdad, London *Independent* (23 March) reporter Robert Fisk headlined his article: "This Is the Reality of War. We Bomb. They Suffer." The current number of civilian dead will pale in comparison with what will come once the siege of Baghdad begins in earnest.

The number of Iraqi troops slaughtered while defending their country may already number in the thousands. Reporting on one of the war's first battles, the *Sydney Morning Herald* (22 March), citing a U.S. officer, stated that Navy aircraft "dropped 40,000 pounds of explosives and napalm," conjuring images of American atrocities in Vietnam. While the Pentagon has issued a denial, an official at the Red Cross in Geneva noted that the U.S. never signed a 1980 United Nations agreement banning the use of napalm.

An Iraqi spokesman aptly labeled the columns of American and British troops heading toward Baghdad as "columns of colonization." In a stirring statement to a mass antiwar rally in Hanoi on March 15, a leading Vietnamese official declared, "Once victims of aggressive wars, trade embargoes and blockades ourselves, the Vietnamese people understand the difficulties and suffering of the Iraqi people."

The first act of "Operation Iraqi Freedom" was to secure Iraq's oil fields for the freedom of untrammeled exploitation by ExxonMobil and British Petroleum, symbolized by the planting of an American flag in the southern desert. Already, the Bush administration has been handing out contracts to its cronies in Halliburton and other American companies to "rebuild" Iraq.

The corporate media dutifully acts as public relations pimps for the Pentagon, retailing the lies of Bush's Ministry of Disinformation and smothering what news one might get from Arab stations like Al Jazeera. The war buildup has been accompanied from the very beginning by a Big Lie campaign, from the report of Iraqi nuclear material purchases in Africa that turned out to be a forgery to claims of weapons of mass destruction by a touted Iraqi defector who was later

continued on page 8

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Remembering Stephen Jay Gould

15 February 2003

Dear *WV*,

I very much appreciated the excellent article honoring Stephen Jay Gould ("Science and the Battle Against Racism and Obscurantism," *WV* No. 797, 14 February 2003). It was indeed disheartening to see Gould near the end of his life trying to reconcile science and religion, in contradiction to the whole thrust of his life's work debunking racist religious obscurantism.

In 1999 *Skeptical Inquirer*, which bills itself as "the magazine for science and reason," had a special issue on "Science and Religion" which included Gould's article, "Non-Overlapping Magisteria." His piece was answered sharply by scientist Richard Dawkins' article, "You Can't Have It Both Ways: Irreconcilable Differences?" Dawkins said in part:

> "It is completely unrealistic to claim, as Gould and many others do, that religion keeps itself away from science's turf, restricting itself to morals and values... Religions make existence claims, and this means scientific claims...
>
> "There is something dishonestly self-serving in the tactic of claiming that all religious beliefs are outside the domain of science. On the one hand miracle stories and the promise of life after death are used to impress simple people, win converts, and swell congregations. It is precisely their scientific power that gives these stories their popular appeal. But at the same time it is considered below the belt to subject the same stories to the ordinary rigors of scientific criticism: these are religious matters and therefore outside the domain of science. But you cannot have it both ways."

This prompted me to write a letter to the editors of *Skeptical Inquirer*, and though I never sent it to them, it seems *a propos* to present it here:

Dawkins has the decisive edge over Gould when he writes, "Religions make existence claims, and this means scientific claims"—and hence inevitable conflict between science and religion. This raises the age-old question of why religion persists, and so I hoped to find an answer in Steven Pinker's article, "Whence Religious Belief?"

Pinker notes that polls show sixty-nine percent of Americans believe in angels, and "ninety-six percent believe in a God or universal spirit." He then goes on to offer a shallow psychological explanation having to do with a "demand for miracles." But this fails to explain why America, the leading industrial country in the world, is particularly plagued by religious obscurantism.

It is very instructive to contrast the U.S. with the former East Germany. Even a decade after the fall of the Berlin wall, "80 percent of the population is unchurched" (ChristianityToday.com, August 9, 1999). Polls show "73 percent of West Germans indicated they believed in God—while 65 percent of East Germans said they did not."

Evidently a planned economy did the East Germans some good. And even today, though they suffer high unemployment in the united capitalist Germany, they choose not to wallow in the "opium of the people."

Mark K.

On the American Civil War and the Taiping Rebellion

4 February 2003

Dear Comrades,

I wish to make a correction to the otherwise excellent article, "Marxism, War and the Fight for Socialist Revolution," (Part One, January 17, 2003). America's Civil War was not "the bloodiest conflict of the 19th century." The Taiping Rebellion in China, which began in 1850 and ended in 1865, took a toll of twenty million lives, making it the costliest conflict in human history until the imperialist slaughter of World War I. (See Jonathan Spence, *God's Chinese Son*.)

The distinction between the two conflicts goes beyond historical body counts. Marx wrote some perceptive articles (did he write any other kind?) for the *New York Daily Tribune* on the Rebellion, pointing out that no matter how violent, the uprising against the Imperial government had to take the form of a messianic peasant revolt, and therefore was doomed to fail. China's bourgeoisie, on the other hand, was too weak, and unwilling—being a servant of British imperialism—to overthrow the Empire. At the same time, Marx considered the concurrent U.S. Civil War "The Second American Revolution," a bourgeois revolution against the Southern slavocracy. An unfinished revolution, as *WV* has always pointed out, but one that demonstrated American capitalism could still play a progressive role.

Best regards,
J.C.P.

TROTSKY

LENIN

Only Workers Revolution Can End Imperialist War!

As U.S. imperialism launches its bloody invasion of neocolonial Iraq, it is imperative to understand what strategy is needed to put an end to imperialist war. We print below a statement by the Workers Party, then the American Trotskyist organization, written after the 1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia. As opposed to the Stalinists who sought alliances with imperialist forces like France's Laval or the League of Nations, Trotskyists stressed the importance of international class struggle for defense of Ethiopia, as well as of the Soviet degenerated workers state, underlining the necessity of a workers party to fight to sweep away the imperialist order that breeds war.

The Workers Party calls for the defense of the Ethiopian peoples against Italian aggression, for the defense of the U.S.S.R., for unremitting struggle against the coming imperialist war. But for this defense and this struggle, the Workers Party calls at the same time for the sole means by which they can be, in fact, conducted: for the independent and autonomous action of the working class. It is the international working class, especially the Italian working class, together with the oppressed colonial peoples, who are the true allies of the Ethiopian peoples—not "peace-loving" Britain, nor the League of Nations, nor Stalin-Laval, nor Roosevelt, nor their own Christian Emperor and semi-feudal chieftains. It is the independent sanctions of the working class, its own boycotts, strikes, defense funds, mass demonstrations that can aid the battles of the Ethiopian peoples, not the sanctions of finance-capital and its puppet states....

The struggle against war is not and cannot be conceived as an "independent" struggle, having a special status above class conflicts. It is an integral part of the revolutionary struggle for workers' power....

More clearly than any other phase of revolutionary activity does the struggle against war attest ***the international character of the revolutionary movement.*** It is an international struggle and must be conducted in terms of an international strategy, through an integrated international organization. Thus the struggle against war poses, in the most intense form, the central task of the present period: the building of the Fourth International, the dynamic generator to drive forward the revolutionary advance of the working class.

—"Statement on the War Situation," Workers Party of the United States (1935)

Li Alguo

Mid-19th-century Chinese peasant rebellion shown in painting titled "Taiping Army Occupying Nanjing."

For a Class-Struggle Program in the ILWU!

17 February 2003

Comrades,

Wanted to thank you, personally, for the fine article, in WV #797 [14 February 2003], "IG on ILWU and NYC Transit: Worthless Pilots in Stormy Weather."

Like i told Gene, in our phone conversation last evening, it pulled me up short and gave me pause about political tact in a period of great need for movement but no motion of the labor movement. Lack of consciousness is pretty extreme and no sense yelling fire when no one is ready to put the fire out but you.

What i had wanted to raise with Comrade Gene, and neglected to, is about the state of the ILWU [International Longshore and Warehouse Union]. What is happening in the ILWU is what happened to the NMU [National Maritime Union]. You have a union that is controlled by senior personnel, many with more than decent salaries and perks galore (only in relation to other organized industries), while the industry could not function without the labor of thousands of 2nd, 3rd and 4th class citizens as far as the democratic life of the union (not to mention that these "lower class" workers are foregoing many benefits and, in some cases less money per hour and job, than their senior brothers and sisters). It is my opinion that until the ILWU squares this away they will not be facing the PMA [Pacific Maritime Association] & U.S. Government with any kind of unity and strength capable of winning a battle. In fact i don't give the union a hell of a lot more time under the present political makeup.

Certainly it is no easy matter but would think that the struggle for political and economic equality for the "lower class" longshoremen of the ILWU coupled with the demand for no doubling out and "20 and Out" for all dock workers would be

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 25 March.

No. 800 **28 March 2003**

Fight Rollback of Abortion Rights!

On March 13, the Senate voted to ban the safest procedure for extremely rare late-term abortions, intact dilation and extraction. The bill is expected to pass the Republican-controlled House and be signed into law by George Bush. This is nothing short of a major assault against legalized abortion established by the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. If this bill becomes law, it would be the wedge for overturning ***all*** abortion rights, which the anti-woman bigots have sought for the last three decades through both legislative and judicial means and the unleashing of "god squads" that have bombed abortion clinics, terrorized patients and even murdered doctors. Just last week, a New York State court convicted James Kopp for the 1998 murder of Dr. Barnett Slepian.

The fight to defend abortion rights must be redoubled as the drive to overturn legalized abortion threatens to throw women back to the days of humiliation, degradation, maiming and death.

A sizable percentage of the women who seek late-term abortions are poor, desperate young women, often black or Hispanic, who have virtually no access to health care, contraceptives or even any real sex education. As one clinic counselor said, "By the time they get their Medicaid straightened out and can come in, they are at 27 weeks." Teens face the added constraints of parental consent laws, and many endure mandatory waiting periods with state-imposed anti-abortion "counseling." The Bush administration is determined to make "virginity pledges" the sole form of "birth control" for teenagers.

WV Photo

October 1998: NYC protest against murder of Dr. Barnett Slepian by anti-abortion terrorist.

The Bush gang is certainly a scary bunch, rife with Christian fundamentalists who want to impose their reactionary "morality" on every aspect of everyone's life. Well aware that a majority of the population supports the right to abortion, Democratic Party presidential hopefuls have been cynically playing the "pro-choice" card. But it was the Democrats who paved the way for the reactionary domestic agenda of the Bush White House. Playing to the Christian right, "born again" Democratic president Jimmy Carter in 1977 intoned in regard to the ban on federal funding of abortions for poor women, "There are many things in life that are not fair." Under "pro-choice" Bill Clinton, well over 200 state measures were passed restricting access to abortion, while the elimination of welfare forced poor women onto slave-labor "workfare" or into starvation.

The strategy of reliance on the Democratic Party and the capitalist government pursued by NARAL Pro-Choice America (formerly the National Abortion Rights Action League) and the National Organization for Women (NOW) effectively *demobilized* the struggle to defend abortion rights. Carrying this strategy to absurd lengths, today NOW urges the Bush administration to use the "anti-terror" USA-Patriot Act—which massively bolsters the state's repressive powers against immigrants, minorities, labor and any perceived opponent of the government—against right-wing clinic attackers! The bourgeois state is not a "neutral" body but a machinery of violence that enforces the class interests of the capitalists against the working people and minorities. Abortion rights, like other crucial democratic rights, were wrested from the capitalist class through tumultuous class and social struggle, not through lobbying the government.

The Spartacist League has fought for mass mobilizations, backed by the power of labor, to defend the abortion clinics against the "pro-life" bigots. To defend the right to abortion and contraceptives particularly for poor and minority women means a struggle for ***free abortion on demand*** as part of ***free, quality medical care for all***. As Marxists, we recognize that women's oppression is rooted in the institution of the family which, along with religion, serves the capitalist class as a bedrock of social conservatism, bourgeois morality and submission to authority. The fight to defend women's rights, including the right to abortion, must be generalized and broadened into a struggle against the entire capitalist system. Only socialist revolution can begin to lay the material basis for the full liberation of women from economic dependence and for their complete social integration.■

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the way to unify the ranks for a full frontal attack. Just some thinking on my part and, as you should know, thinking has been dangerous to my health.

Comradely
Freedom Now For All
Class-War Prisoners
& A Socialist World!
Charlie M.

***WV* Replies:**

Brother Charlie brings up several issues which affect an increasing number of unionized workers in the U.S. today. The pro-capitalist bureaucracies often run unions as job trusts for a small percentage of the most skilled workers, and have allowed employers to institute tiers where workers with higher seniority are pitted against newer hires who are often paid less and have fewer benefits though they work the same jobs. It is a matter of elementary defense for workers to fight for a common, democratic and militant unionized workforce, which requires "a struggle to turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labor aristocracy," as Leon Trotsky spelled out in "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (1940).

Brothers Gene and Charlie were both members of the Militant-Solidarity Caucus, which fought for such a class-struggle approach within the National Maritime Union, from 1968 until 1981 when the erosion of U.S. shipping and the corrupt chicanery and betrayals of the NMU bureaucrats reduced the union to a fraction of its former strength. The Militant-Solidarity Caucus put forward a program to guide the struggle of the working class for political power, including an intransigent opposition to the U.S. war in Vietnam at a time when the NMU and International Longshoremen's Association leaders were organizing *pro*-war parades in New York City. The caucus also stood for organizing the lower-paid foreign seamen into unions in counterposition to the NMU bureaucrats' protectionist policies denouncing "foreign flag shipping."

A key demand of the caucus was for the abolition of the "group" system that divided the union into different classes. It organized a formal committee to fight the discrimination against the lower-seniority Group 2s that attracted younger seamen, demanded equal shipping status for all and helped to win full union rights for the Group 2s. The caucus also raised the need for an increase in jobs at the expense of the employers through a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, for extended vacation time to promote a continuous rotation of jobs, and for an end to the "homesteading" setup in which some seamen got a permanent job with one company on a single ship.

For a presentation of our understanding of the tasks before the ILWU, readers are referred to "West Coast Longshore Contract: Threat to Union's Future" in *Workers Vanguard* No. 795 (17 January).■

DaSilva/NY Times

Oakland, September 2002: Longshoremen picket docks after bosses declare lockout.

Protest Exclusion of Bernadette Devlin McAliskey!

On February 21, veteran Irish Republican militant Bernadette Devlin McAliskey was detained and then deported by U.S. immigration officers zealously carrying out the government's "war on terror." On her way from Dublin to New York for a family visit, McAliskey had been cleared for travel by U.S. immigration officials in Dublin. But upon arrival at Chicago's O'Hare airport, she and her daughter Deirdre were singled out by immigration agents, then bullied, threatened and interrogated for hours. When McAliskey protested this outrageous violation of her civil rights, one of the immigration officials retorted, "After 9/11, nobody has any rights." We say: Let Bernadette McAliskey into the U.S.!

While Deirdre was finally allowed to continue on to New York, Bernadette was photographed, fingerprinted and immediately put on a plane back to Ireland. The INS claimed that she had an "expired visa waiver" and that the State Department had declared that she "poses a serious threat to the security of the United States." This blatantly political exclusion is part of the sweeping rollback of democratic rights being carried out by the warmongering U.S. government, ultimately targeting black people, labor and all those who speak out against the capitalist state.

Perhaps the exclusion of this famous Irish activist was a U.S. payback to British prime minister Tony Blair for his loyal service to American imperialism. In the late 1960s, Bernadette Devlin became a symbol of the struggle of the oppressed Catholic minority of Northern Ireland, first as a leader of the social-democratic People's Democracy and later as a founding member of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. At 21, she became the youngest person ever elected to the British Parliament, and three years later she witnessed the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre by British paratroopers of 13 civil rights marchers in Derry. In 1981 she and her husband, Michael McAliskey, survived an assassination attempt by right-wing Loyalist (pro-British) thugs.

Upon hearing of her exclusion, New York's Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 offered a symbolic invitation to Bernadette McAliskey to address the union's annual commemoration of Irish socialist James Connolly and historic TWU leader Mike Quill, who was a supporter of the Irish Republican movement. The labor movement and all potential victims of government repression must mobilize to defend civil liberties against the capitalist rulers' onslaught.

Young Spartacus

Join the SYCs!

Young Spartacus

Spartacist/SYC built Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent calling for defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack in Washington, D.C., March 15.

The U.S. imperialists' long-planned wholesale destruction of Iraq is a cruel colonial war carried out by the bloodiest ruling class in the world. As the rape of Iraq began in earnest, high school and college students around the country streamed into the streets in protest. Already unions internationally have carried out actions aimed at impeding the U.S.-led war. The anger in this country against the impoverishment of working people as Bush's cronies grow richer, the widespread hatred and fear of war and the opposition of youth who do not want to be cannon fodder and the seething anger in the ghettos and barrios against racist oppression must be welded together into a struggle against this system of exploitation, racism and war.

We young communists in the Spartacus Youth Clubs are building revolutionary internationalist contingents at antiwar demonstrations based on the demands: *All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!* We take a side with Iraq against U.S. imperialism. We look to the working class as the only force in society with the power and objective interest to stop imperialist war and call for it to mobilize in class struggle to defend Iraq.

The naked U.S. imperialist military might on display in Iraq is meant also as a warning to America's imperialist rivals, who compete for control of markets, raw materials and spheres of exploitation. The imperialist order can only plunge the world deeper into misery, degradation and death. Imperialist war is a concentrated expression of the normal workings of capitalism, exacerbating the tensions of class society to a fever pitch. Unemployment and union-busting, detention of immigrants and deportations, attacks on civil liberties go hand in hand with the war. Under capitalism, most youth face a future of no education and no jobs, or worse for the sons and daughters of black, Hispanic and other working people who the ruling class are sending off to die in the desert along with countless Iraqis.

Nothing short of workers revolution across the globe can shatter the imperialist order. But on the ground all the protest organizers (International ANSWER, Not In Our Name, United for Peace and Justice) push anything and everything except revolution as the way to "stop the war." They work to turn the demonstrations into platforms for the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, the alternate ruling party of imperialism—of Hiroshima/Nagasaki and the escalation of the Vietnam War. Dissident Democrats and the Green Party talk peace only to get antiwar youth off the streets and back to the ballot box.

Ludicrously, the reformist "antiwar leaders" endlessly appeal to the UN, under whose starvation sanctions half a million Iraqi children have died and whose "weapons inspectors" were spies preparing Iraq for the slaughter. Now they hold up as "pacifists" imperialist France, the mass torturers of the Algerian War, and Germany, whose ruling class put Hitler into power. We say: No to "unity" with the defenders of the capitalist order of racism and war! Break with the Democrats—Build a revolutionary workers party!

The SYCs intervene into social struggles armed with a working-class program based on the politics of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. The Spartacist League and SYC have built labor/black mobilizations to stop Klan and Nazi provocations, as in New York City on 23 October 1999. We have initiated actions against ROTC, which trains the officer corps for the bourgeois military, and campus military recruiters. We have exposed and protested racist ideologue David Horowitz and joined in actions in defense of abortion clinics. Demanding "Free Mumia!" we join in united-front demonstrations defending death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. The SYCs support workers strikes and on 9 February 2002 we helped build the labor-centered mobilization in Oakland in defense of union and immigrant rights.

To prevail against the might of the capitalist state requires an organized and disciplined vanguard party that can mobilize the power of the working class supported by all the oppressed. The SYCs fight to win youth to the perspective of building the Leninist party that will unite the working class in struggle against capitalist imperialism. We seek to build a nationwide revolutionary socialist youth movement. Join us in the fight for socialist revolution!

Spartacus Youth Clubs Ten Point Program

1 Mobilize students behind the social power of the multiracial working class! Picket lines mean don't cross! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Down with union-busting "workfare" schemes! Jobs for all at union wages! Organize the unorganized—unionize the South! Down with multi-tier wages, which pit younger and older workers against each other! Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions! Keep the bosses' government and courts out of the unions!

2 Black oppression is the bedrock of racist American capitalism. Finish the Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution! For mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists and race-terrorists! No to gun control! For the right of armed self-defense! No reliance on the capitalist courts or politicians! Fascist terror is not a question of "free speech." Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

3 For free, quality, integrated public education for all! Nationalize the private universities! Defeat the racist assaults on affirmative action! For an end to tracking! For open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students! Abolish the administration—the universities should be run by those who work and study there! Down with police occupation of public schools! Cops off campus!

4 For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For mass, labor-backed mobilizations to defend abortion clinics! Down with parental consent laws and "squeal rules"! For free abortion on demand! For free, quality 24-hour childcare! For free, quality health care for all! Equal pay for equal work! Down with anti-gay laws! Down with reactionary age of consent laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt! Down with all laws against crimes without victims—prostitution, consensual sex, drugs!

5 Down with racist anti-immigrant laws! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Organize foreign-born workers into the unions! No deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Arab, anti-Asian, anti-Semitic and all racist bigotry!

6 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all class-war prisoners! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! Defend victims of racist cop terror and police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or "community control" of the police! For labor mobilizations against racist cop terror! Down with the "war on drugs," a racist war by the ruling class against black and Hispanic youth! The capitalist state—at its core consisting of the cops, courts, prisons—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organized violence by the capitalists against the workers and the oppressed. It must be smashed through workers revolution!

7 Defend separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Keep religion out of the schools! No prayer in the schools! Down with the teaching of creationism! For the teaching of evolution! No government funding for religious, private or "charter" schools!

8 Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution! The UN is a den of imperialist thieves, their victims and their lackeys! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans, East Timor, the Persian Gulf! Down with U.S. terror bombing of Iraq! Down with the UN starvation blockade! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean! U.S. imperialist butchers: hands off the world! No to the draft! Not one man, not one penny for the imperialist military! Drive ROTC, CIA and police recruiters off the campuses!

9 For international working-class solidarity! Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! Workers of the world, unite! For unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist attack! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats and establish regimes of workers democracy, based on the power of workers councils, and revolutionary internationalism!

10 Break with the racist, warmongering Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism! For a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that fights for socialist revolution! Look to the example of the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 Russia! For new October Revolutions! For the international rule of the working class!

The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the youth groups of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Mass Arrests at Antiwar Demos

Free Them Now! Drop All Charges!

As soon as news broke of the U.S. attack on Iraq, antiwar protests swept across the country. Many of the rallies and marches condemning the war were met by cop attacks and widespread arrests. Thousands of people nationwide, from Austin, Texas and Asheville, North Carolina to San Francisco, Chicago and New York City, were arrested over the four days following the initial bombing of Baghdad. Labor unions, especially those who are on record as opposing the war, must now use their social power in defense of the antiwar protesters.

Since Thursday, more than 2,270 activists have been arrested in San Francisco alone, where the liberal City Council was hailed for passing an "antiwar" resolution. The cops shoved demonstrators and routinely surrounded small groups of activists on all sides and then arrested them for "failure to disperse." At a March 21 protest at the Federal Building, U.S. Marshals struck a 75-year-old wheelchair-bound man in the face, and later a federal park ranger truck gunned its engine and hit a protester who was narrowly pulled to safety. At the Bay Bridge, the California Highway Patrol beat demonstrators with their nightsticks and then pepper-sprayed those who did not flee fast enough.

In Chicago, where more than 600 have been arrested, city police mobilized en masse on March 20 to block a 10,000-strong antiwar march. As protesters began to disperse, cops in riot gear trapped over 1,000 people at a downtown street intersection and proceeded to arrest over 540—from high school students to press reporters to passersby. The next day, thousands of police in riot gear formed a wall four deep at an antiwar protest at the Federal Plaza.

Indymedia

San Francisco, March 21: Antiwar protest was met by sweeping arrests.

The crackdown on antiwar protest extends to the campuses. At Pasadena City College in Los Angeles, a student walkout on March 20 turned into a full-scale cop rampage. When some students returned to classes to recruit others to their walkout, campus cops attacked the activists, kicking, punching, pepper-spraying and striking them with batons. Enraged by the cop attack, students broke into the room where their classmates were being detained. City police in riot gear were then called in. As 150 students marched through the campus chanting antiwar slogans, ending at the campus police station, two students were arrested.

Many youth are outraged at the mass slaughter the U.S. has unleashed. What is necessary is to direct this outrage into a revolutionary fight to get rid of the system that butchers Iraqis, sets cops on antiwar protesters and carries out an all-sided attack against working people, minorities and immigrants.

We reprint below a letter sent by the Partisan Defense Committee, the legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, on March 20 to the office of the District Attorney in San Francisco.

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee again strongly protests the mass arrests of antiwar demonstrators, numbering more than 1,300 today in the streets of San Francisco alone. The mass arrests of protesters who seek only to exercise their democratic rights is part and parcel of the government's campaign to criminalize dissent as it wages war abroad and ravages the working class, blacks and immigrants at home.

In a grotesque and dangerous assault early this morning, 15 youthful demonstrators who linked arms through lengths of plastic tubing were forcibly separated by four dozen riot police wielding chain saws. As sparks flew, serious injury was only prevented by firefighters who covered protesters with their jackets. Early mass arrests had already filled county jails so that police commandeered a Muni bus to transport arrested demonstrators to an abandoned warehouse at Pier 27 and to jails as far away as Santa Rita. While most of these demonstrators were charged with "jaywalking" or "blocking traffic," according to the National Lawyers Guild at least one organizer of the protests is being held on felony "incitement to riot" charges.

As U.S. cruise missiles and "bunker buster" bombs rain down death and destruction on Baghdad and occupation forces pour into Iraq, the SFPD shreds the democratic rights of those who wish to lend their voices to the millions around the world protesting this savage imperialist aggression. We demand: Free all protesters now! Drop all the charges!■

Honor Rachel Corrie...

(continued from page 12)

opponents of Zionist terror must draw on her bravery; her death must not be in vain. At the March 22 antiwar protest in New York City, there was a contingent of pro-Palestinian activists carrying placards and large banners honoring Rachel and building for a march and rally to "Defend Iraq and Palestine" on March 29. With most antiwar protest organizers looking to appeal to the pro-Zionist Democratic Party, the Palestinian cause has been largely buried at protests against the war in Iraq. But defense of the Palestinian people must be a central call of the millions across the world who mobilize in opposition to U.S. imperialism's rape of Iraq. *Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories!*

We fight for the mobilization of the tremendous social power of the international working class in defense of the Palestinians, especially the proletariat of the Near East. Today, protests are erupting throughout Near Eastern cities against the American onslaught against Iraq and the venal Arab rulers who are going along with it. It is the task of revolutionaries to intervene into such movements to forge Marxist workers parties to fight for workers revolutions against all the capitalist regimes of the region. The only salvation for the Palestinian people lies through workers revolution and a socialist federation of the Near East. The Zionist state must be shattered from within through a socialist revolution uniting the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers against the bloody Zionist rulers. The deep anti-Arab chauvinism of the Hebrew proletariat can be broken by a historic event, most favorably a workers revolution in one of the Arab countries proclaiming the international unity of all working people. But if the workers of the Near East are to break their own chains of exploitation, they must be won to a relentless struggle against the Islamic fundamentalists and nationalists who may pose as enemies of Zionism and imperialism. The urgent task at hand is the construction of internationalist workers parties committed to sweeping away the entire rotting edifice of capitalist class rule in the Near East. *For a socialist federation of the Near East!*■

AP

Palestinian medical workers honor Rachel by carrying mock coffin in protest outside UN headquarters in Gaza City, March 17.

Spartacus Youth Club Classes and Events

BOSTON

Alternate Mondays, 7 p.m.

March 31: **Black Oppression Is the Bedrock of Racist American Capitalism: For Revolutionary Integrationism! For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

BU School of Education, Room 212
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

April 8: **Socialism and War**

University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis, Room TBA
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

March 29: **Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

April 1: **For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

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or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

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Cale Pergolisse (at Cedar and Elm)
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April 2: **No Illusions in the Pro-Imperialist NDP! Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!**

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SL/U.S. Statement...

(continued from page 1)

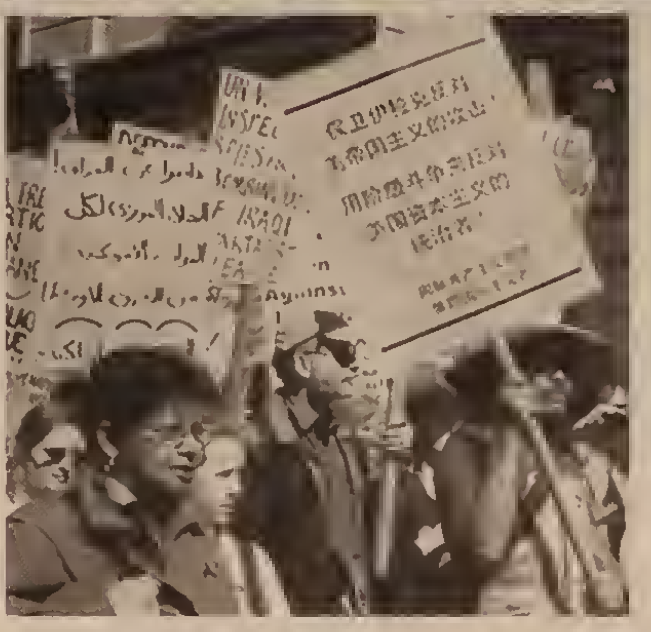
imperialists intend to pulverize Iraq, planning to drop some 3,000 "smart bombs" in the first 48 hours of this one-sided slaughter. The United Nations inspectors did their job, setting Iraq up for the kill by verifying that it had no means to defend itself. With the world's mightiest empire arrayed against neo-colonial Iraq, it could not be clearer that the chief means of defending Iraq is through international class struggle, particularly in the United States.

Workers in Italy, Scotland and elsewhere have already staged labor actions against the war, including blocking military goods destined for the Persian Gulf. Such actions point the way to the kinds of labor struggles that are necessary, especially in the belly of the American imperialist beast. The obstacle to this is the AFL-CIO labor officialdom, which pits American workers against their class brothers and sisters around the world by promoting national chauvinism and subordinating workers to the dual parties of capitalist rule, the Democrats and Republicans.

Defense of Iraq is inescapably tied to defense of the Palestinian people against Zionist terror. The right-wing Sharon government, which is currently slaughtering Palestinians at a rate of up to a dozen a day, could very well use the cover of war to implement a genocidal program of forcible expulsions of the Palestinians. The deliberate murder of a young American student, Rachel Corrie, is a message to all defenders of the besieged Palestinians that it's open season on them, too. Antiwar protesters must take up the call to *defend the Palestinians* and demand: *All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories now!*

To the millions of workers and antiwar youth who have marched in cities around the world, now is the time to redouble your efforts. But what is crucial is to understand what's wrong with the antiwar movement. You were told by all the organizers of antiwar protests—from International ANSWER to Not In Our Name and United For Peace and Justice—that to stop the war from happening what was needed was the broadest possible movement. This can only mean a movement built in alliance with "antiwar" Democratic Party politicians like Jesse Jackson. *You were told lies!* To build an antiwar movement with bourgeois politicians is to build an antiwar movement with representatives of the very class in whose interest imperialist war is waged. And it is precisely now that the war has begun that these "respectable" liberal politicians will rally around "our troops," even as they carry out a colonial slaughter in Iraq.

WV Photos



Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at massive NYC antiwar protest, March 22. Left: ICL sign in Chinese reads: "Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack! For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!" Arabic placard demands: "Defend Iraq! All U.S. Forces Out of the Near East Now!"

The protests of millions around the world are a welcome expression of defiance and opposition to American imperialism. But to put an end to war, one must start with a perspective that challenges the very basis of the capitalist system. War is not simply a policy but the logical outgrowth of this irrational capitalist order. The question facing antiwar activists and workers is not merely one of more militant tactics. If there is one lesson to be drawn, it is the absolute necessity of fighting to get rid of this deeply inhumane system through workers revolution. *Only socialist revolution can put an end to imperialist war!*

Fighters against imperialist war must look to mobilizing the social power of the multiracial American proletariat in struggle. There is plenty of anger at the base of American society. The bloated American ruling class and this particularly grotesque government are lording it over working people and minorities, showering tax cuts on the rich while millions are homeless or losing their jobs and pensions. There is widespread fear and loathing of this Christian fundamentalist government that wants to extend its oppressive reach into every aspect of people's lives. It is little wonder that despite all the pro-war jingoism of the media, a good chunk of the population still opposes the war. Indeed, within the imperialist military itself, many black, Latino and working-class soldiers do not want to kill and be killed for this racist government rife with admirers of the Confederate slavocracy.

The domestic reflection of the U.S. war on Iraq is the Bush administration's broadside against workers, minorities and immigrants. This government is tearing up the rights that have been won through decades of militant struggle for black freedom, for union rights, for women's equality. Now they are threatening to round up over 11,000 people of Iraqi descent, including American citizens. Following 9/11, they detained Near Eastern and South Asian immigrants. Then they declared that anyone Bush determines to be an "enemy combatant" could be stripped of all constitutional rights. They now want to expand the USA-Patriot Act to strip citizenship from anyone deemed to be aiding "terrorists." In the name of the "war on terror," the government wants to squash any expression of dissent. *This must be met with defiant mass protests, centered on the social power of labor, against the Iraq war, in opposition to the roundups, detentions and deportations and in defense of all our rights. Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

In pursuing its ambitions for unchallenged world domination, the American bourgeoisie increasingly sees no further use for the UN. The UN was created at the end of the Second World War as a creature of the imperialist powers—centrally the U.S.—to provide a cover for their wars and interventions. Today, American imperialism's open talk of "preemptive" strikes, including nuclear first strikes, has served to sharpen tensions and hostilities between the U.S. and its imperialist rivals, centrally Germany and France. This is the shape of the "New World Order" emerging from the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, whose military might helped to stay the hand of the American nuclear madmen.

The Soviet Union was the homeland of the 1917 October Revolution, which overturned capitalist rule in Russia. Despite its subsequent Stalinist degeneration, it was a workers state embodying enormous gains for the working class, women and diverse national and ethnic minorities. Carried out in the midst of World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution pulled Russia out of the war and showed how imperialist depredation and war can be defeated. We fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution, just as today we fight for the defense of the remaining deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—including their urgent right to develop nuclear weapons.

The increasing hostilities between the imperialist powers portend future inter-imperialist wars to be fought out with nukes. And the U.S. imperialists have clearly proven themselves capable of plunging humanity into a nuclear holocaust. The only way to prevent that catastrophe from happening is through international socialist revolution. The Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, fights to build a Bolshevik workers party in this country committed to the defeat of U.S. imperialism through socialist revolution. Writing on the fourth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin stressed "the grim and inexorable truth that it is impossible to escape imperialist war, and imperialist peace...which inevitably engenders imperialist war, *except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution.*" *Defend Iraq! All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism!* ■

Spartacist League/TLC Forums

Defend Iraq! All U.S. Troops Out of the Near East Now!

Iraq: Women's Liberation and the Fight for Socialist Revolution

Speaker: Amy Rath, Spartacist League/U.S., former editor of *Women and Revolution*

Saturday, March 29, 2 p.m.
322 W. 48th St., 1st floor
(Take E or C train to 50th St. stop, between 8th and 9th Avenues)

For more information: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

NEW YORK CITY

Down With U.S./Canadian Imperialism!

Defend Iraq!

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Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor St. W., Room 2211
(above St. George Station)
For more information: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

TORONTO

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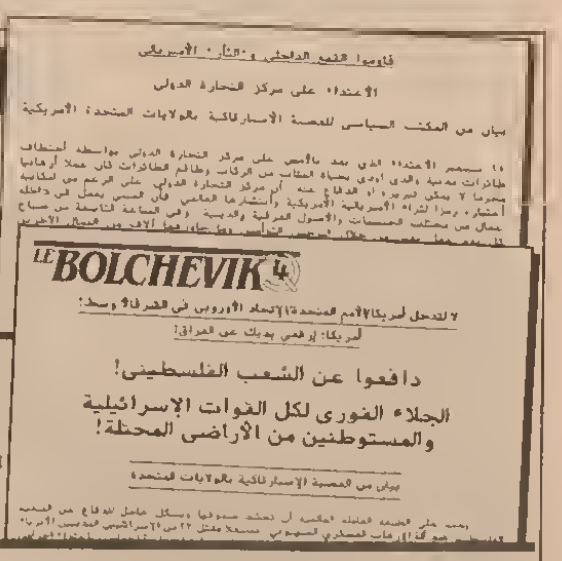

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Spartacist League/Britain Statement

Defend Iraq! All U.S./British Troops Out of the Near East Now!

The following statement was issued on March 21.

With the loyal backing of Blair's "New" Labour government, the nuclear madmen in the White House have unleashed the military might of U.S. imperialism for the bloody slaughter of Iraq. This is nothing but a colonial war of naked imperialist aggression to be followed by a colonial occupation of this oil-rich Near Eastern country. We stand for the military defence of Iraq against U.S. and British attack. Every setback for these imperialist forces abroad is a blow in defence of the interests of the working class and oppressed masses around the world. It is the job of the working people of Iraq, and throughout the Near East, to get rid of the bloody regime of Saddam Hussein and all the colonels, sheiks and dictators, including the Zionist butchers who are using the cover of this war to ratchet up their daily killing of Palestinians with the aim of forcible expulsion. It is our job here to build the revolutionary leadership that can mobilise the only force with the social power and class interest to challenge the rule of capitalist imperialism: the multiethnic working class.

The working class in Britain and the Iraqi people face a common enemy in the British imperialist rulers today represented by Blair's Labour Party. To unleash more troops for the slaughter of Iraq, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott has announced he will enforce a settlement on the firefighters who have been baited as "Saddam's friends" for struggling to better their miserable wages and working conditions. But just as the imperialists want to enforce class peace at home in order to wage their dirty colonial wars abroad, every successful fight in defence of the workers' interests breaks a cog in the imperialist war machine. In bringing munitions trains to a grinding halt in Scotland, ASLEF [Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen] train drivers demonstrated the social power of the working class that can and must be mobilised against this war. But to mount such a class-struggle opposition requires a policy of uncompromising opposition to, and independence from, all the institutions and agencies of capitalist class rule.

The Stop the War Coalition makes much of uniting the broadest forces possible against the war. But unity with whom and for what? *Socialist Worker* (22 March) demands that the "Labour-rebels" who voted against war turn their words into actions by "building the anti-war movement." But what were their words? Arguing that "the case for war against Iraq has not yet been established, especially given the absence of specific UN authorisation," the amendment put forward in Parliament by "antiwar" Labour MPs ended by declaring "total support will be given to British forces if hostilities do commence"! Needless to say, "total support" to the military forces raping Iraq renders impossible any effective class-struggle mobilisation against war. Here is the real face of "unity" based on a programme of bourgeois pacifism, one which sows illusions in capitalist "democracy" as the road to peace while rallying behind "god, queen and country" when the bombs start dropping.

And when the bombs started dropping on Baghdad, the Stop the War Coalition was not far behind, decrying: "This war is a travesty and tragedy. There is no UN mandate and no justification." *For the past 12 years there has been a UN mandate for sanctions which have taken the lives of over one and a half million Iraqis, far more than were killed in the 1990-91 Gulf War!* Bob Crow, the left-talking leader of the RMT [National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers], likewise declaims that Blair has taken "illegal action" (i.e., without the authority of the United Nations) to argue that "we should also take illegal action." Vaguely referring to civil disobedience, Crow certainly isn't talking about anything so "illegal" as trade union action in defiance of the government and its anti-union laws. On the contrary, the trade union tops in Britain could not even summon up the nerve to participate in the 10-minute work stoppage called by the European trade unions on 14 March.

Break with Labour "Old" and "New"—Build a Bolshevik Party!

Workers Hammer

Spartacist League/Britain contingent at London February 15 antiwar protest.

To mobilise any genuine proletarian opposition to the war, workers must understand that war is simply the concentrated expression of a system based on the exploitation of labour; that for the imperialists guns *are* butter; that the United Nations since it was established at the end of World War II has operated solely to perpetuate and enforce the world's domination by the imperialist powers, centrally the United States. That this den of imperialist thieves, their satraps and victims is now being flouted by American imperialism is simply testimony to the U.S.' emergence as the world's unrivalled military power following the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the former Soviet Union. The Labourites who run the Stop the War Coalition do not strive for the abolition of capitalism but simply want to align British imperialism more independently from the Americans.

Although bureaucratically degenerated and undermined by Stalinist misrule, the Soviet Union continued to embody gains for the working class achieved through the overthrow of capitalist rule by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. The International Communist League fought until the bitter end to defend those gains against imperialist attack and the forces of internal counterrevolution. Today we continue this fight in defence of the remaining workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—including their urgent right to develop nuclear weapons. In contrast, most of those leftists who now protest the nuclear cowboys in the White House for throwing their military might around the world, lined up behind U.S. imperialism and its allies in backing the very forces of counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union.

In his classic antiwar book *Socialism and War*, written in the midst of the carnage of the first imperialist world war, Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin wrote:

> "Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same politico-ideological content—class collaboration instead of the class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one's 'own' government in its embarrassed situation, instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments so as to advance the revolution."

Lining up as the loyal lap dog of American imperialism has caused great embarrassment for Blair's "New Labour" government with the resignation of government ministers and opposition of backbenchers reflecting the increasing fractures between the overtly pro-capitalist leaders of the party and its working-class base.

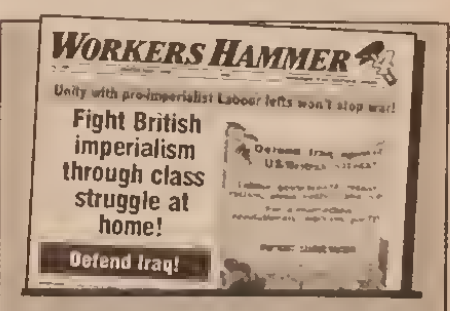
We fight to exacerbate these contradictions, to split the working class from the grip of Labourism which has long served to tie the proletariat to the interests of capitalist class rule. Our purpose is to build a genuine workers party, one which fights for a thorough-going social revolution culminating in the class rule of the proletariat. But for the rest of the self-proclaimed "socialist" left, aligning themselves behind "left" Labour MPs like George Galloway, Blair's troubles in time of war are seen as the opportunity to breathe life back into the politics of "Old" Labour—where "Her Majesty's Parliament" was promoted as the "road to socialism" and public welfare programmes were offered to console those at the bottom of this system of brutal exploitation of the many by the few, and particularly to ward off the possibility of any serious social struggle.

With its calls for a "global general strike" Workers Power merely seeks to put a bit of left gloss on this project of "reclaiming Labour." This is all so much idiotic hot air. A general strike poses the question of which class shall rule. But for Workers Power it merely poses a parliamentary regime change. Arguing that a general strike could "easily develop into a battle over who rules the country" they point to 1974 when, "faced with a strike over pay by miners, the government turned it into a struggle over who rules the country" (*Workers Power*, March 2003). In 1974, the Tories were voted out of office and the Labour Party was voted in!

The Labour Party has always loyally served the interests of British imperialism. It went along with the imperial carve-up of the Near East after World War I which created the artificial state of Iraq and left the Kurds without a homeland. The Labour Party joined in a coalition government with Winston Churchill's Tories during World War II that maintained the relentless subjugation of colonial India. The post-World War II government of Clement Attlee marshalled British troops and bombers for the slaughter of over three million Koreans during the UN-sanctioned Korean War. It was the Labour government of Harold Wilson which sent British troops into Northern Ireland to back up the Orange statelet and its subjugation of the oppressed Catholic population. Not a word in opposition to these troops is today uttered by the Stop the War Coalition.

Far from advancing a struggle for "peace," those putative leftists who peddle illusions in parliamentary "democracy" promote the chauvinism of the capitalist rulers. They denounce Blair for joining "Bush's war," yet it was Blair's Labour Party government which launched a "war on terror" at home, outlawing immigrant and refugee organisations more than a year before the U.S. imperialist rulers seized on the criminal attack on the World Trade Center to launch its own draconian witch hunt against immigrants. Organisations like the Turkish leftist Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C) have been outlawed, their offices raided and a number of people now face criminal charges. *British troops out of Northern Ireland! Down with the anti-terrorism laws! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Millions of people around the globe have poured out in protest against U.S. imperialism's drive to war against Iraq. The mammoth demonstration in London on 15 February was a stunning measure of the increasing hatred of Blair's "New Labour" party. But none of this stayed the hand of the mad bombers in the White House or their toadies at 10 Downing Street. If there is one lesson that can and must be drawn by workers, antiwar youth and others who genuinely oppose this naked colonial war of imperialist aggression it is the absolute necessity of splitting with the social chauvinists and fighting to end the entire system of capitalist imperialism which generates war and the ideology which justifies it. *Only socialist revolution can end imperialist war! Defend Iraq! All U.S./British troops out of the Near East now! Break with Labour "Old" and "New"—Build a Bolshevik Party!* ■



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Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

revealed to be a "consummate liar."

"Stock Prices Rise as War in Iraq Appears Inevitable," announced the *New York Times* (18 March) after George W. Bush's prime-time ultimatum last Monday, which catapulted the stock exchange to its best week in 20 years (only to plunge as soon as the U.S. began suffering military setbacks). "Profits rising, proletarians falling," proclaimed Rosa Luxemburg, the Polish Jew who led the revolutionary wing of the German workers movement, amid the slaughter of World War I. Speaking of an imperialist system that was to claim over 20 million lives in four years, she wrote in her "Junius Pamphlet" (1916): "Shamed, dishonored, wading in blood and dripping with filth—thus stands bourgeois society. And so it is. Not as we usually see it, pretty and chaste, playing the roles of peace and righteousness, of order, of philosophy, ethics and culture. It shows itself in its true, naked form—as a roaring beast, as an orgy of anarchy, as a pestilential breath, devastating culture and humanity."

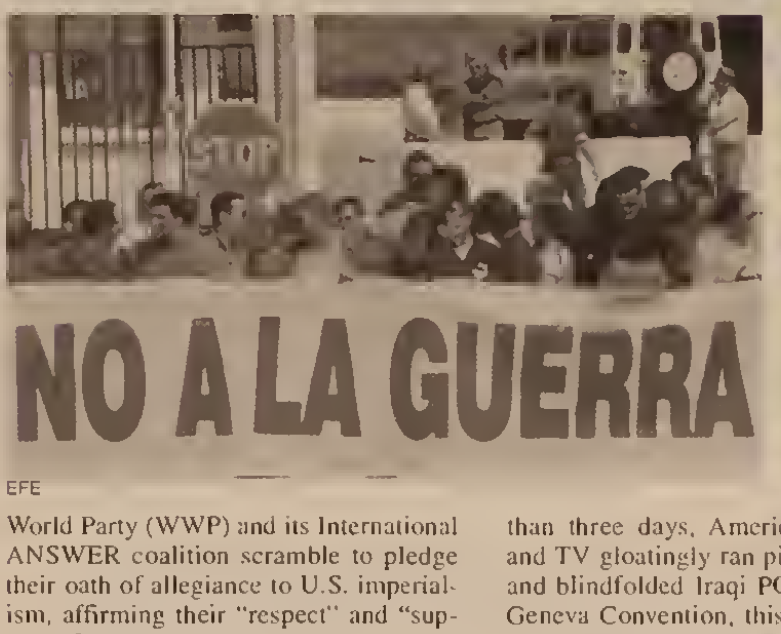
This is the face of imperialism, of the irrational, anarchic, profit-driven capitalist system made even more irrational in its epoch of decay. Mass slaughter is the concentrated expression and ultimate logic of the "normal" brutal workings of the capitalist system, which daily condemns countless numbers around the world to death by malnutrition, lack of medical care and industrial murder.

If there is to be a choice for coming generations of working-class and minority youth other than one of grinding exploitation, joblessness, mass imprisonment or military servitude, if the impoverished masses of the world are to have a future other than starvation and slaughter, this whole system must be torn up by its roots through a socialist revolution and replaced by a rational, planned economy internationally.

This is what must be grasped by the workers and youth who have poured out into the streets from San Francisco and New York to Paris, Rome and Cairo in anger and defiance against the American imperialist beast. There can be no unity of the exploiters and exploited in the struggle against imperialism and war. As the first bombs fall, the pacifism of the liberal capitalist politicians and their social-democratic and trade-union lieutenants reveals itself, as always, to be nothing more than window-dressing for national chauvinism. Bourgeois pacifism serves not to restrain the warmakers but to pacify the working masses.

The United Nations, having done its best to disarm Iraq and starve its people into submission, now waits to volunteer its "humanitarian" services in a post-Saddam Iraq. Capitalist governments in Europe and the Near East that sanctimoniously intone "no to war" turn their police batons and water cannon against antiwar protesters. Congress votes with near-unanimity to give its full backing to the Commander in Chief of this rapacious bloodbath. Al Sharpton and other "antiwar" Democrats embraced by self-proclaimed Marxists like the Workers World Party (WWP) and its International ANSWER coalition scramble to pledge their oath of allegiance to U.S. imperialism, affirming their "respect" and "support" for "our troops," the army of colonial slaughter and occupation.

Reuters



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Top: Antiwar protest by South Korean trade unionists on International Women's Day. Right: Athens demonstration outside U.S. embassy during four-hour general strike, March 21. Below: Civilian workers at U.S. air base in Spain, March 14.

AP

Iraqi child, victim of U.S. terror bombing of Baghdad.

Antiwar Protests Sweep the World

Wielding an arsenal of high-tech holocaust, the leaders of American capitalism arrogantly boast of their military successes against a country whose total national income is but a tiny fraction of what the U.S. spends every year on arms. Yet the fact that this small country, bled white by 12 years of United Nations sanctions and saddled with a bloody, U.S.-installed regime, has succeeded in mounting any military resistance to the American juggernaut is a measure of the Iraqis' hatred for the colonial invaders. It is now widely reported that thousands of Iraqis living in Jordan and elsewhere are returning to "fight against the Americans."

The U.S. hoped for a quick seizure of Basra, a lightly guarded city right near the Kuwaiti border with a predominantly anti-regime Shi'ite population, as a photo-op of American "liberation." It has still not fallen. There has been heavy fighting outside a number of towns, and one U.S. officer was killed by an American GI who threw a couple of grenades into a command tent at a base in Kuwait. While far fewer Iraqi soldiers have surrendered thus far than the 9,000 "reported" by the media days ago, the Iraqis have managed to capture and display a number of American POWs, provoking Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld to rant about violations of the Geneva Convention. This is imperialist hypocrisy of the highest degree: for more than three days, American newspapers and TV gloatingly ran pictures of bound and blindfolded Iraqi POWs. As for the Geneva Convention, this is rich coming from a government that is obliterating entire city neighborhoods, that kidnapped hundreds of Afghans and others and spirited them off to a concentration camp in Guantánamo, that has arbitrarily imprisoned over a thousand immigrants and even its own citizens without charges, labeling them "enemy combatants."

We welcome every blow struck against the imperialist invasion forces as a blow in the interests of working people and the oppressed around the world. But as one Iraqi colonel who surrendered said, "I've got a rifle from World War II. What can I do against American airplanes?" As we have stressed from the outset of the drive to war, *the chief means of defending Iraq lies in class struggle against the imperialist rulers.*

Italy has seen continuous strikes since the bombing started. While the country's main trade-union federation called for a two-hour strike on Thursday afternoon, workers spontaneously poured out from factories, offices and schools to join the protest demonstrations, effectively extending the strike in many regions. Workers chanted, "The only general we like is general strike." In Greece, there was a four-hour protest strike on Friday, while some 150,000 marched on the U.S. embassy in Athens and the U.S. base in Soudas on Crete was blockaded. Those engaged in labor actions against the war must broaden their struggle into one against capitalism itself.

While largely symbolic, an ILA longshore union local in New Brunswick, Canada passed a resolution promising to "hot-cargo" military goods destined for the Persian Gulf. A 20 March protest statement by the COSATU trade-union federation in South Africa denounced the "invasion and mass murder of the defenceless people of Iraq" and noted, "We are now tasting the full consequence of unipolar power following the collapse of the Soviet Union." Labor actions against the war must be intensified and extended internationally, including and especially in the United States.

But this requires a sharp struggle against the social-democratic and reformist misleaders of the labor movement. In Italy, the reformist Rifondazione Comunista, which has organized many of the antiwar protests, seizes this moment to declare its support for a new popular-front Olive Tree coalition with the Party of the Democratic Left, whose government in 1999 prosecuted the U.S.-led NATO war against Serbia on behalf of Italian imperialism. In Australia, the promised shutdown of construction sites in Sydney by the building workers bureaucrats turned into a handful of spontaneous actions, while Green "antiwar" leader Bob Brown denounced protesters for burning an American flag and declared that "we" should now hope that Saddam Hussein is removed quickly.

In their turn, the AFL-CIO labor officialdom, under John Sweeney, having mildly criticized Bush for circumventing the UN, now proclaims it is "unequivocal in our support of our country and

AFP

Egyptian protesters battle riot police in Cairo during antiwar demonstration, March 21.

Italian Trotskyists at Milano Protest:

"For Workers Strikes Against the War!"

We print below the translation of a March 20 speech, slightly edited, by a comrade of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, section of the International Communist League, at the State University in Milano during a day of mass protests following the start of the bombing of Iraq.

The war against Iraq is an imperialist war of murder and robbery by the U.S. imperialists and their allies, but a just and defensive war on the side of Iraq. We are not pacifists, and we call on the workers to take a side in defense of Iraq without giving an inch of support to the nationalist, anti-working-class regime of Saddam Hussein. Defense of Iraq means mainly class struggle at home. We call for workers strikes against the war and to mobilize the social power of the working class in concrete actions against NATO bases and other military infrastructure that is being used against Iraq.

We are not reformists, such as the Pantera Collective [a front group of the Falcemartello organization associated with Ted Grant's Militant tendency] who just spoke. We know that if the bourgeoisie keeps in its hands the means of production, the means of destruction and the state, it can always find a way to push people into a war when needed. War can only be stopped through a series of socialist revolutions that uproot the capitalist system that breeds war. This is why we need a revolutionary workers party to lead the working class in a conscious fight to overthrow capitalism.

The precondition to this fight is a break with those forces that support capitalism. Rifondazione Comunista (RC) is opposing this war from the standpoint of social-chauvinism: they call for the "national sovereignty" of Italy, and they present the European imperialist powers Germany and France as "pacifists" while they are sending their troops to the Balkans and Ivory Coast and waging a war against immigrants at home. RC said today that the Pope is the "prophet and living icon in a future free from the sin of war" (*Liberazione*, 20 March). This won't stop the war but will forge new chains for women, gays, immigrants. Anti-imperialism means class struggle against one's own capitalist class. It means opposing Italian militarism in the Balkans, where it was sent by the former government of the "left" with RC support. We call for Italian troops out of the Balkans and Afghanistan! We have to fight against the racist war that the Italian bourgeoisie is waging on immigrants.

Falcemartello here says that they are against "this war." But they support the capitalist state and the reformist parties that rule it, like the Labour Party in Britain. They have just stated that "the right wing accuses the Marxists of wanting to leave the nation undefended. This is entirely false. We are not pacifists and accept the need for an army" (www.marxismo.net, 6 February). Defending the nation just means supporting the aims of your own bourgeoisie. Those who "defend the nation" are not socialists but petty-bourgeois reactionaries, as Trotsky said. The capitalists are threatening all civilization. Thus the task to build a revolutionary workers party to overthrow them is all the more urgent.

America's men and women on the front lines" and urges the labor-hating racist in the White House "to redouble the administration's commitment to bolstering our security against terrorist attacks here at home." These labor lieutenants of American imperialism not only endorse the bloodbath of Iraqis but demand that Bush and Asheroft—who have already unleashed up to 5,000 FBI agents to hunt down Iraqi nationals and others—"redouble" the roundups of immigrants, shredding of civil liberties, surveillance of left and labor activists and crackdown on union struggle which are carried out under the rubric of the "war on terror."

The interests of the international working class, especially in the U.S., are the exact opposite of those promoted by Sweeney & Co. The proletariat must stand firmly in defense of Iraq against the U.S./British attack.

In the countries dominating the imperialist invasion force, the U.S. and British sections of the ICL issued immediate statements in defense of Iraq against this colonial war. There and in other countries our contingents stood out for our aggressive championing of immigrant rights and our defense of the Palestinians against Zionist terror. In Rouen, France, a group of Kurdish workers joined our contingent in agreement with our call for defense of Iraq. In Toronto, a contingent of the Trotskyist League punctured the prevailing "left" unity behind the social-democratic New Democratic Party (NDP) with chants of "Who's next after Iraq? Defend North Korea against imperialist attack!" and a sign reading "NDP Says $ Billions for Canadian Army—We Say Not a Person, Not a Penny for the Imperialist Military!" In San Francisco, our contingent at the March 22 protest chanted: "Imperialist war, we say no, the whole damned system's got to go!"

AFP

Italy: Placard depicts Bush and Prime Minister Berlusconi as "the new Hitler and Mussolini." Italy has been rocked by strikes and mass protests since launching of war.

Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!

A new generation of youth is today having its eyes opened to the savagery of imperialist capitalism. Seeking to appeal to such sentiments, *Workers World* (20 March) declaims on its editorial page: "If there were a dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S. today, instead of a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, this war would never happen." Perish the thought that Larry Holmes or any other Workers World Party spokesman would utter such a statement while sharing an ANSWER platform with the Democratic Party representatives of that dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Because in the real world, WWP's purpose is precisely to hoodwink young activists into thinking that this war could be stopped if only the movement becomes "broad" enough so that a sufficient number of Democratic politicians find it expedient to bleat "No to Bush's war." Only weeks earlier, *Workers World* (27 February) enthused that the huge February 15 protests had dealt a "body blow" to the Bush administration's "strategy for world domination." Try telling that to the people of Baghdad.

Many antiwar youth are coming to see that even the most mammoth peace marches, while expressing opposition to American imperialism, will not deter the capitalist government from waging war. While the mainstream of the antiwar movement embraces calls like "Peace is patriotic," many youth understand that this is a colonial war and that Iraq has every right to defend itself. At the March 22 protests, many youth took up our chant "Defend Iraq against U.S. attack!" and welcomed our slogans against the Democrats. But the self-styled communists of the Progressive Labor Party steadfastly refuse to take a side in defense of Iraq even as U.S. imperialism invades the country!

In the days since the bombing began, thousands of protesters in cities across the U.S. have courageously defied the cops and faced arrest in civil disobedience actions against the war. But no amount of militant direct actions can put a dent in the U.S. war machine, as was demonstrated at the time of the Vietnam War. As we wrote in "From Protest to Power," a major 1967 statement that was distributed in the hundreds of thousands: "Personal sacrifice can never substitute for a mass movement, and it is necessary to understand this in developing a perspective for the anti-war movement." It is necessary to go from a perspective of endless protests to a program for proletarian power aimed at sweeping away the imperialist system as a whole.

That means tapping the fundamental discontents and conflicts in American capitalist society—the anger of the oppressed black masses; the glaring disparity in wealth between the many at the bottom and the few at the top; the fear of joblessness, homelessness, loss of health insurance and pensions that plagues tens of millions of American workers. To do so requires a struggle to break workers and minorities from the stranglehold of Democratic Party "lesser evil" politics, which is reinforced by the labor bureaucrats and the petty-bourgeois black preachers and politicians. And for radical youth looking for a program of *class war* against this entire system of racist oppression and imperialist war, that means breaking as well with the class-collaborationist unity-mongering of the reformist left.

The black Democratic mouthpieces and labor lieutenants of the bourgeoisie embrace the armed forces of American imperialism as "our troops." But the capitalist rulers spit on the black, Latino and working-class ranks of the military, who are just so much expendable cannon fodder to kill and be killed in the interests of General Motors, General Electric and ExxonMobil. The father of a black Marine killed in a helicopter crash in Kuwait held up a photo of his son to the TV cameras and declared bitterly, "George Bush, take a good look at this man, 'cause you took my only son away from me."

Support for the war among blacks runs some 30 percent lower than among whites. "The reasons are obvious," writes black columnist Derrick Z. Jackson in the *Chicago Tribune* (3 March). "African-Americans are 12 percent of the general population but make up 21 percent of military personnel and 30 percent of Army enlistees." And, he might have added, some 50 percent of the overall prison population.

Key to labor struggle against imperialist militarism is breaking the class-collaborationist "national unity" pushed by the bourgeoisie and the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. Working-class struggle can and indeed *must* change the reactionary political climate. To reverse the one-sided war against labor and the oppressed, to oppose the U.S. rulers' wars of depredation and to defend civil liberties demands the independent class mobilization of working people on behalf of all the oppressed. The multiracial U.S. working class must be won through Marxist education and its own experience and struggle to the perspective of building a workers party that fights for socialist revolution.

"New World Order" Nightmare

As with the massive use of sophisticated weaponry against benighted Afghan tribesmen last year, the enormous firepower being deployed against Iraq is a gratuitous show of imperialist military force. *Asia Times* (19 March) correspondent Pepe Escobar wrote, "The European Union, China and Russia beware: the

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Iraq...

(continued from page 9)

Shock and Awe demonstration that is about to be unleashed on Iraq is pure *theatrical militarism*." "This is just the beginning," said an administration official (*New York Times*, 23 March). "I would not rule out the same sequence of events for Iran and North Korea as for Iraq." And Pentagon aide Richard Perle proclaims that France is no longer an ally and that NATO "must develop a strategy to contain our erstwhile ally" (quoted by Escobar).

As we assert in the 19 March statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.: "This is the shape of the 'New World Order' emerging from the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, whose military might helped to stay the hand of the American nuclear madmen." The U.S. bourgeoisie seized on that world-historic defeat for the proletariat, the final undoing of the first workers revolution in history, to proclaim a "one-superpower world" in which no challenge to American imperialist hegemony would be countenanced.

As far back as 1992, right on the heels of the destruction of the Soviet Union, leading elements of what is now the White House/Pentagon inner circle called for "deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role," in the words of a Defense Policy Guidance draft produced by current Vice President Richard Cheney and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. This is today official government policy, enshrined in the National Security Strategy affirming a general policy of "pre-emptive" war that was adopted by the White House last fall, only months after the Pentagon released a Nuclear Posture Review openly avowing a nuclear first-strike policy. The current White House/Pentagon cabal of Christian evangelicals and Zionist "neo-conservatives," who are connected with the sinister Project for a New American Century (PNAC), openly asserts its god-given right to rule the world.

It is no accident that the Cheney cabal, which was a minority voice in the Bush Sr. administration, calls the shots under Bush Jr. The U.S. bourgeoisie has grown dizzy with success since the end of the Cold War, and Cheney & Co. are a distillation of this arrogant imperialist triumphalism. As Chalmers Johnson explained in an Internet article titled "Iraqi Wars" (10 January):

> "After George W. Bush became president many of these men returned to positions of power in American foreign policy. For nine months, they bided their time. They were waiting, in the words of PNAC's 'Rebuilding America's Defenses,' for a 'catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor' that would mobilize the public and allow them to put their theories and plans into practice. September 11 was, of course, precisely what they needed. Condoleezza Rice called together members of the National Security Council and asked them 'to think about "how do you capitalize on these opportunities" to fundamentally change American doctrine, and the shape of the world, in the wake of September 11th'."

For the bloody rulers of American imperialism, the slaughter of 3,000 New Yorkers in a criminal terrorist attack—carried out by Islamic fundamentalist creatures of U.S. imperialism—is nothing more than an "opportunity"!

AP

March 25: Massive funeral procession in Baghdad following six days of U.S. terror bombing.

U.S. Aided Saddam Hussein's Rise to Power

In an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (14 March), former National Security Council staffer Roger Morris points out: "Forty years ago, the Central Intelligence Agency, under President John F. Kennedy, conducted its own regime change in Baghdad, carried out in collaboration with Saddam Hussein." Intent on eliminating the bourgeois-nationalist Qassim (Kassem) regime that rode to power on the back of a massive uprising against the British-backed monarchy in 1958, the CIA organized a coup led by the anti-Communist Ba'ath party. Citing a former Ba'ath leader, Morris reports:

> "Among party members colluding with the CIA in 1962 and 1963 was Saddam Hussein, then a 25-year-old who had fled to Cairo after taking part in a failed assassination of Kassem in 1958....
>
> "Using lists of suspected Communists and other leftists provided by the CIA, the Baathists systematically murdered untold numbers of Iraq's educated elite—killings in which Saddam Hussein himself is said to have participated....
>
> "Soon, Western corporations like Mobil, Bechtel and British Petroleum were doing business with Baghdad—for American firms, their first major involvement in Iraq."

Deposed shortly thereafter, in 1968 the Ba'athists staged another coup with CIA backing, which soon placed Saddam Hussein at the pinnacle of power. For years, U.S., German and French firms supplied Iraq with technology for the development of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and in 1983 Rumsfeld himself went to Baghdad for a cozy chat with Hussein, the man now dubbed "another Hitler." It was only in 1990, when Washington no longer felt the need to counter Soviet influence in Baghdad and throughout the region, that the U.S. turned on the Iraqi strongman after he seized Kuwait from its billionaire oil sheik family.

The 1963 bloodbath was the price paid by Iraqi Communists, workers and Kurds for the betrayals of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy and the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) leadership in 1958-59. The overthrow of the monarchy opened up a revolutionary situation in which power was increasingly in the hands of the ICP, which had enormous support among the working masses, national and ethnic minorities and even sections of the military (see "Near East, 1950s: Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism," Part Two, *WV* No. 741, 8 September 2000). The U.S. drew up contingency plans for a counterrevolutionary invasion, with U.S. troops landing in Lebanon and British forces in Jordan. But instead of leading the Iraqi workers to power, the Stalinist ICP leadership tied them to Qassim's bourgeois nationalists. On orders from the Khrushchev regime in Moscow, which was pursuing the pipedream of "peaceful coexistence" with U.S. imperialism, the ICP moved to rein in its working-class base, and the revolutionary wave began to recede, paving the way for the Ba'ath party's bloody rise to power in 1963.

New York Times

Mass demonstration in Baghdad, July 1958. Crushing of 1958-59 revolutionary upsurge beheaded Iraqi proletariat.

A workers revolution in Iraq, carried out under the banner of proletarian internationalism, would have had a profound impact throughout the Near East, inspiring revolutionary upheavals in other countries and helping to shatter the chauvinist consensus binding the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to the Israeli capitalist rulers. The beheading of the Iraqi proletariat had an equally profound effect in the opposite direction, allowing the imperialists to tighten their grip on the region. It also paved the way for the rise of reactionary Islamic fundamentalism—particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union—which today postures as the true friends of the besieged Palestinians and the only alternative to corrupt nationalist regimes and their Western patrons. Even the supposedly secularist Saddam Hussein emblazoned the words "Allah Akbar" (God Is Great) on the national flag on the eve of the first Gulf War and regularly peppers his speeches with references to god and *jihad*.

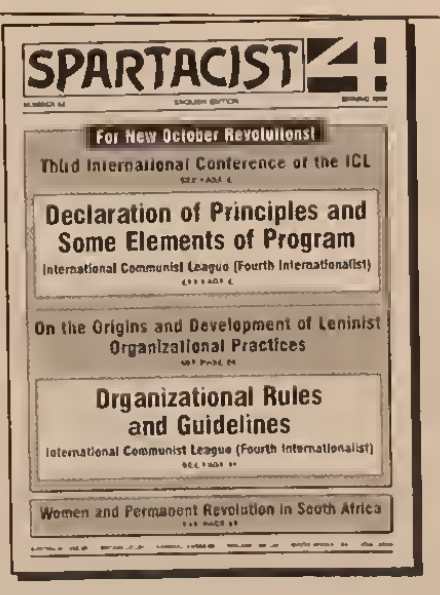
It is testimony to the atomization of the Iraqi proletariat, its strength further sapped by 12 years of privation, that the warmongers in Washington could believe they would encounter little resistance in conquering Iraq and even hope to be welcomed as "liberators." To be sure, such cynical calculations are already beginning to fall apart and will most certainly go up in smoke in the course of a prolonged, brutal and uncertain occupation.

What turned the American invasion of Vietnam in the 1960s into a long, *losing* colonial war was mainly that the Vietnamese masses fought not only in a national struggle against the U.S. imperialists but for a *social revolution* to sweep away the indigenous landowners, military men, pimps and drug dealers who ruled on behalf of the imperialists. And this was greatly aided by the existence of the Soviet Union as a counterweight to the Americans.

In the face of this "people's war," the U.S. engaged in a war of annihilation against the Vietnamese people, slaughtering upwards of three million in the course of a decade. But the Vietnamese workers and peasants persevered and prevailed. The debt owed them by working people and minorities in the U.S. and around the world for their valor and sacrifice in humbling the blood-drenched American ruling class will only be repaid when U.S. imperialism is finally defeated for good through workers revolution in the belly of the beast.

The crimes of the Ba'athists against Iraqi workers, Kurds and Shi'ites serve to underline why the call for *military* defense of Iraq is counterposed to any political support to the Saddam Hussein regime. In this war, our position is one of revolutionary defensism toward Iraq: seeking to combine the struggle for national independence against American imperialist militarism with a social revolution against the Iraqi capitalists and landowners. But to this day, the Iraqi proletariat suffers from the legacy of its defeat in 1958-59. This underlines the necessity for the most advanced elements of the Iraqi proletariat to draw the lessons of the 1958-59 betrayal and fight to cohere a Leninist-Trotskyist party committed to the political independence of the proletariat. Only through proletarian revolutions against all the bonapartist dictators, sheiks and Zionist butchers can the workers and oppressed throw off the yoke of imperialism and lay the basis for a socialist federation of the Near East.

There is enormous anger throughout the world against this bloody invasion. Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets of London and Berlin, and upwards of 300,000 marched through New York City on Saturday. From Spain to Yemen, protesters clashed with riot police. In Cairo, defiant demonstrators chanted, "Down with the Arab leaders!" To harness this anger into a struggle against the capitalist system that breeds war, it is necessary to forge revolutionary workers parties to lead the fight for international socialist revolution. *Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! All U.S. troops out of the Near East now!* ■



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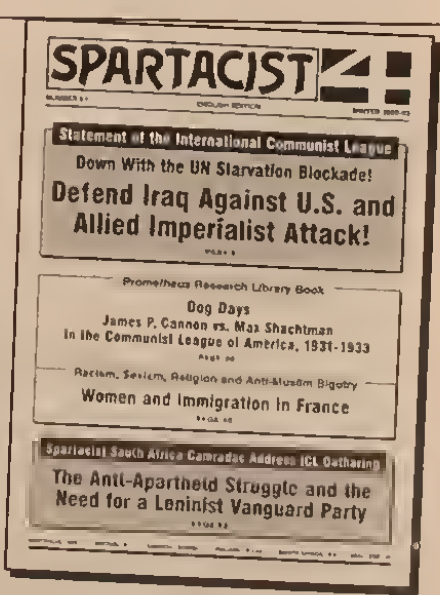

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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Bush to World: "Drop Dead!"

> "Why of course the people don't want war.... But after all it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it's always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy or a fascist dictatorship.... Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they're being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger."
>
> —Hermann Goering (Gestapo/Nazi leader), Nuremberg, 1946

The world has witnessed the most massive anti-war demonstrations in global history, and the Bush Administration proposes to treat them as non-events. Incredible!

This administration has, from its earliest days, acted with barely concealed contempt for the wishes of the world. The evisceration of the ABM treaty was one measure. The rejection of the International Criminal Court. The insults against German leaders who don't bow sufficiently when Americans stride in the neighborhood. The rampant Francophobia. The negation of the will of the United Nations.... These are but variant strains of an underlying theme: The United States, the Great, Mighty bastion of democracy, could care less what the majority of the world wants, not to mention what the majority of Americans want. War is dictated by the military-industrial-complex, and...so be it.

When a million people turn out in the capital of the country of America's "closest ally" to oppose his policies, and the U.S. still loosens the reins of the mouth-foaming dogs of war, then "ally" is just a synonym for "servant," for surely, it cannot mean anything remotely like "friend." The beleaguered British Prime Minister, Tony Blair is facing an intra-party battle that threatens to topple its hold on power. What a queer duck this "democracy" is! It allows those in power to virtually ignore what the majority of the people (that they supposedly "represent") wants! Yet, Herr Bush, in truest dictatorial fashion, gives the nod to the army, and virtually promises to ignore whatever the UN does—unless they genuflect before His Imperial Majesty, King George II (or is it III?).

The Turkish Parliament boldly votes against the U.S. Empire's wishes to use its land as a planning table for massacre and war, and the Americans insist that they vote again! (Again—isn't this kind of, well, anti-democratic?)

"The Empire Strikes—First!"—and threatens to rip the world in half, unless all adore the Empire—New Babylon—and surrender before her all that she wishes.

We are all at the very brink of war, one which will not soon end. Truth be told, we are on the precipice of World War, if just a few small things go disastrously wrong.

Hundreds of cities, on all six continents, from Kuala Lumpur to Ramallah, from Seoul to Seattle, from London to Leningrad, and beyond, the message went forth in a din that was deafening in its simplicity: "NO WAR!" But the White House is soundproof (except for the sound of coins jangling in the pockets of arms merchants or defense lobbyists) and the President of the United States is deaf. The government that Lincoln once claimed, "of the people, by the people, and for the people," won't hear the people—because they aren't saying what they want to hear.

What will it take?

What is clear is that it will take more than what has happened thus far.

Demonstrations are powerful indicators of popular consciousness, but is it enough when the State is profoundly undemocratic, and driven by other forces?

The answer may lie in that little-used social resource of union power. The recent statement of the AFL-CIO (a federation of trade unions in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Panama and U.S. territories) against the war, while quite remarkable, was all but dismissed by the Bush Regime. What would happen, however, if a general strike were called among all member unions, against this imminent war?

It may take such measures to begin to put the dogs of war back in their cages, before, as Dr. Nelson Mandela suggested, a modern-day "holocaust" is unleashed upon the world.

4 March 2003

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Contributions are urgently needed for Mumia's legal defense. Checks made payable to "SEE Mumia Free" should be sent to: Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Police State...

(continued from page 12)

January 11: NYC protest against registration of immigrants from Islamic countries that led to detention of hundreds nationwide.

conducted on the Internet or maintained in other computer databases, including the financial, medical, communication and travel records of everyone living in or entering the U.S. In other words, the labor-hating, anti-sex Bush administration, replete with admirers of the Confederacy, will know what books and periodicals you read, what music you listen to, what movies you watch, what cities and countries you travel to, who you sleep with and what type of contraception you use.

But that's not all. Patriot II would reward businesses that provide "information" to the government in "terrorism" investigations with immunity from lawsuits for slander and malicious prosecution. This is an invitation to the bosses to get rid of union militants by crying "terrorist." It also serves to revive Ashcroft's TIPS program calling on Americans to spy on one another, which was rejected overwhelmingly by Congress last year. Patriot II would also annul consent decrees entered into by police departments that purportedly limited their spying on political activists. These were adopted as settlements of lawsuits following exposure of FBI COINTELPRO and local police campaigns of surveillance, harassment and disruption of hundreds of organizations and hundreds of thousands of individuals engaged in legal political activity, particularly in the 1960s. Declaring that such decrees prevented the cops from "gathering information about organizations and individuals that may be engaged in terrorist activities and other criminal wrongdoing," this provision explicitly equates lawful political dissent with terrorism.

Anyone who thinks they have nothing to fear better take another look. In justifying its police state plans, government spokesmen rant that "terrorist sleepers" lead outwardly normal lives—students, businessmen, parents and soccer dads—and therefore everybody is suspect. Under the Patriot Act's definition of terrorism, the Feds' victims could include unionized government workers on strike or demonstrators protesting the U.S. military base in Vieques, Puerto Rico. Groups that have found themselves on Washington's "terrorist" hit list in the past included South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) and the Irish Republican Army. Had Patriot II been in effect at the time, donations by anti-apartheid protesters to ANC-run schools or contributions by Irish Americans to the defense of framed-up Irish nationalists like the Birmingham Six or Guilford Four would be a ticket to expatriation or residence in the American version of Robben Island or Long Kesh.

But Patriot II goes even further: one could find himself imprisoned for life for support to the entirely legal activities of organizations not even listed as "terrorist" by the government; all that has to happen is that the government decide at some future time that the organization is somehow linked to terrorism. At bottom, the government wants to treat American citizens as though they were subjects of an absolute monarchy, prey to the arbitrary whims of the crown.

Meanwhile, with the slaughter in Iraq underway, the Feds have begun interrogating hundreds of Iraqi Americans, many of whom recognize they may be interned like Japanese Americans during World War II. Abul Haider, spokesman for the Islamic Center of Beaverton, Oregon declared, "The feeling that someone could knock on your door at night and you could be taken away—that's a feeling I thought I left behind when I left Baghdad in 1979."

Patriot II would make the so-called "emergency" measures undertaken by the government following September 11—roundup and detention of immigrants, summary deportations of any immigrant the government declares a threat to "national security," use of secret evidence in trials—into permanent fixtures of the American justice system, extending them to American citizens. What the government is implementing is a revision of the infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857; but rather than ruling that black people have "no rights which the white man was bound to respect," the government is declaring that citizens have no rights which the government is bound to respect.

The laws, measures and decrees being enacted by the Bush administration are ultimately no different from what a military dictatorship would use against its population—suspension of civil courts on presidential command, unlimited powers of police to arrest and detain indefinitely without cause, etc. And it is all done within the framework of bourgeois democracy. As the communist Victor Serge explained in *What Everyone Should Know About State Repression* (1926): "For centuries, justice has been nothing but terror organised to the advantage of the possessing classes. To steal from a rich man has always been a greater crime than to kill a poor man."

But as sinister as the new "anti-terror" measures are, what the government is actually able to get away with will be determined by the level of social struggle. It was the mass struggles against Jim Crow segregation that broke the back of McCarthyism. What is crucial is to mobilize labor's social power in defense of immigrants, which requires tearing through the straitjacket of "national unity" and the poisonous racial and ethnic divisions promoted by the U.S. capitalist rulers to weaken the labor movement and maintain their rule. On February 9 last year in Oakland, longshoremen were at the core of a labor-centered united-front protest initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for Social Defense in opposition to the government's anti-immigrant witchhunt and its "anti-terrorism" laws. More and larger such mobilizations, centered on the power of the working class, are needed to defend all our rights. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Defend the Palestinians!

Israeli Blitzkrieg Claims American Victim

Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old American supporter of the Palestinian people, has joined the mounting numbers of Palestinians being massacred daily by the Zionist state. A student activist at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, Rachel had been in Rafah, Gaza for about seven weeks as part of the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), a group composed mainly of Americans and Europeans who have dedicated themselves to "nonviolent direct action" against the bloody Zionist onslaught on the Palestinians, often acting as "human shields" against Israeli troops. In the seven weeks she was in Gaza, Rachel had taken part in many actions to protect Palestinian homes from destruction by the Israeli army, which has destroyed the homes of over 90,000 Palestinians since September 2000. Rachel had also courageously taken part in actions to protect the Gaza water supply from Israeli attempts to destroy a local well.

Young Spartacus

On March 16, Rachel and several other ISM activists were at the Rafah refugee camp trying to stop the destruction of a Palestinian home. Standing directly in front of the bulldozer, wearing a bright orange jacket with reflective stripes, she and the other ISM supporters appealed over bullhorns for the driver to stop. Instead, he moved the bulldozer forward, crushing her. Then he backed up and ran over her again. She was pronounced dead upon arrival at a local hospital. Rachel Corrie was *deliberately* murdered by the same Israeli army that has slaughtered some 2,200 Palestinian men, women and children in the past 30 months. Her killing is an ominous signal from the Zionist rulers that it is now open season on the pro-Palestinian activists in the Occupied Territories, too.

International Solidarity Movement photos

Rachel Corrie on March 16 courageously attempting to stop Israeli army bulldozer from razing Palestinian home shortly before its driver deliberately runs her over.

An Israeli army spokesman grotesquely blamed Rachel for her own death, declaring that she was "acting very irresponsibly." Then in a manner evocative of their daily treatment of the Palestinians, Israeli troops attacked the mourners at Rachel's memorial service, firing teargas and stun grenades at Palestinian girls laying carnations at the spot where she was killed. They even went so far as to provocatively parade past the mourners a convoy of military vehicles, including the bulldozer that had killed Rachel days earlier.

The death of this courageous young woman marks the first time a member of the ISM has died in defense of the Palestinians against the U.S.-backed Zionist state. Today, as U.S. imperialism launches its bloody invasion of Iraq, the threat to the Palestinians is more acute than ever. Under the cover of this war, the Sharon government, which includes parties openly committed to the forcible "transfer" of all Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, may well try to implement this genocidal policy. One of Sharon's cabinet ministers recently ranted: "Make their life so bitter that they will transfer themselves willingly." And this is exactly what the Zionist rulers have been trying to do with the daily massacres of Palestinians—100 in the last month alone—deprivation of livelihoods for an entire people and escalating destruction of homes and entire neighborhoods.

In powerful and moving letters, made public by her parents after her death, Rachel vividly described the horrific conditions she encountered in Gaza: "All of the situation that I tried to enumerate above—and a lot of other things—constitutes a somewhat gradual—often hidden, but nevertheless massive—removal and destruction of the ability of a particular group of people to survive. This is what I'm seeing here.... So I think when all means of survival is cut off in a pen (Gaza) which people can't get out of, I think that qualifies as genocide." In a remark foreshadowing her own death and placing it in context, she concluded: "If the Israeli military should break with their racist tendency not to injure white people, please pin the reason squarely on the fact that I am in the midst of a genocide."

Rachel Corrie was a manifestly courageous, intelligent and decent young woman who died for the just cause of defending the besieged Palestinian people. Activists against the Iraq war and

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Down With "Patriot II" Police State Measure!

Reuters

While U.S. imperialism carries out its Near East slaughter under the watchword "Operation Iraqi Freedom," the Bush administration is poised to push through a new law that would "free" American citizens from what little is left of the purported protections of the First, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth amendments, and in certain cases from citizenship itself. Developed in secret by Ashcroft & Co., the "Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003," a/k/a Patriot Act II, provides for a vast expansion of powers for the president and his interior ministry ("Justice Department"). It is a bill that Haitian dictator Papa Doc Duvalier and Chilean butcher Pinochet could have embraced as their own. Just as 9/11 was the pretext for the Patriot Act, the administration could well use the invasion of Iraq to ram through Patriot II.

Under Patriot II, those who live in daily fear of the midnight knock on the door by the Feds would no longer be confined to immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries. Anyone who the thought police in Washington see as standing in the way of Wall Street profits and the U.S. drive to dominate the globe could be pinned with the "terrorist" label and hauled off in the dead of night. Patriot II calls for stripping citizenship from Americans who "provide material support" to an organization which at some time may be deemed "terrorist" by the U.S. government. Its victims would be locked away in military prisons, denied the right to legal counsel and to even challenge their incarceration in court. The government is developing the right to disappear people—like hundreds of thousands of leftists and union activists in tinpot dictatorships that the U.S. imperialists have placed in power and supported around the world.

The new law seeks to fortify the Patriot Act, under which the government's secret police already have expanded authority to tap your phone, search your home, scour your financial records, interrogate your librarian and place you under arrest without probable cause that a crime has been committed. On top of this, the Defense Department has plans for a Big Brother "Total Information Awareness" project (TIA), a massive computer system designed to create a centralized database capable of mining and linking existing government and commercial databases. TIA would enable the Feds to access and identify all the transactions of everyday life

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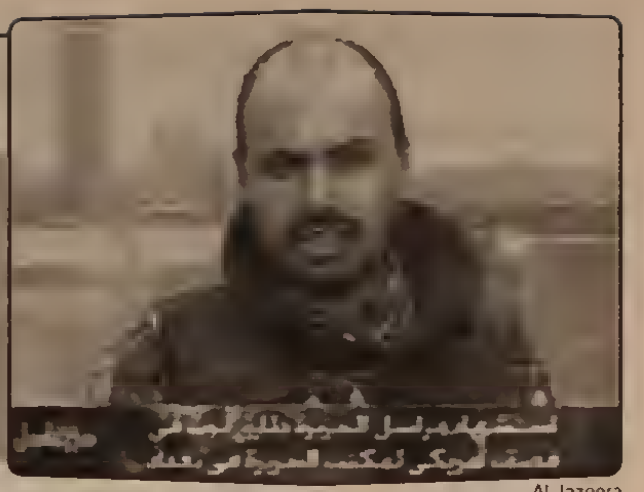
U.S. Vendetta Against Al Jazeera

Truth Is the First Casualty of War



Al Jazeera

Al Jazeera correspondent Tariq Ayoub, minutes before being killed by U.S. misslie strike.

APRIL 8—Today two U.S. missiles struck the Baghdad office of the Arab TV station Al Jazeera, killing correspondent Tariq Ayoub. A few minutes later, U.S. warplanes returned to hit the neighboring offices of Abu Dhabi TV. Two more journalists—Reuters' Taras Protsyuk and Jose Couso of Spain's Tele 5—were killed when a U.S. tank fired on Baghdad's Palestine Hotel, where most foreign journalists are housed. The U.S. claimed the bombing of Al Jazeera's office was "accidental." But as Al Jazeera correspondent Tayseer Allouni declared, "We were targeted because the Americans don't want the world to see the crimes they are committing against the Iraqi people."

Since the launching of the U.S. war drive against Iraq, Al Jazeera has been a particular target of the U.S. Its staff was kicked out of Kuwait when they reported that a third of the country was occupied by U.S. troops. Washington then tried to force the Emir of Qatar, where the station is based, to shut it down for the duration of the war. When Al Jazeera ran images of U.S. POWs, the Pentagon launched a campaign of demonization against the station, despite the fact that Al Jazeera (like every American media outlet) also ran pictures of Iraqi POWs. Then intense hacking from the U.S. shut down Al Jazeera's Web site. Finally, in the ultimate affront, Al Jazeera's reporters were booted off the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Why the vendetta? As one Al Jazeera journalist explained, "By reporting propaganda as fact, the mainstream media has simply mirrored the Blair/Bush fantasy that the people who have been starved by UN sanctions and deformed by depleted uranium since 1991 will greet them as saviours." He added: "My station is a

Al Jazeera

Reuters cameraman Taras Protsyuk, mortally injured by U.S. tank attack on Baghdad's Palestine Hotel.

threat to American media control—and they know it" (London *Guardian*, 28 March). Because of its unique coverage of the war, Al Jazeera has earned millions of new viewers in Europe and the U.S.

It's not only Al Jazeera that Washington and its media whores have vilified. Last week, Peter Arnett was hounded out of his job at NBC and National Geographic for simply reporting to Iraqi TV that the U.S. military had encountered unexpected resistance. Arnett earned the ire of the American imperialists for his honest reporting of the Vietnam War in the 1960s and for his exposure of the bombing of a baby formula factory during the 1991 Gulf War.

On March 26, U.S. forces arrested three independent (i.e., not "embedded") journalists, two Israelis and one Portuguese, who had sought refuge from a sandstorm. They were awakened at gunpoint and accused of espionage. When the Portuguese journalist asked to phone home, he was beaten to the point that his ribs were broken. One of the Israeli journalists, reported *Ha'aretz* (29 March), "added that he received the impression that the American army had done everything it could to ensure that not one independent journalist was reporting from Iraq."

"The first casualty when war comes is truth," remarked Progressive Party Senator Hiram Johnson in 1917. A few days into the American invasion of Iraq, a senior member of BBC News complained, "We're absolutely sick and tired of putting things out and finding they're not true. The misinformation in this war is far and away worse than any conflict I've covered, including the first Gulf War and Kosovo" (London *Guardian*, 28 March).

From the start of this one-sided slaughter, CNN, MSNBC and most other major American and British news stations and papers have willfully retailed lie after lie coming from the Pentagon and White House:

- A day after the U.S./British ground assault began, the Pentagon "reported," in the words of a London *Financial Times* (22/23 March) headline: "Division of 8,000 Iraqi Troops Surrenders." Within 24 hours, this was revealed to be a total fabrication.
- Around the same time, U.S. Central Command claimed to have taken the port town of Umm Qasr—a claim repeated *nine* times before the city was finally "secured."
- On March 25, British commanders claimed that an anti-Saddam uprising had begun in the southern city of Basra. The correspondent for Al Jazeera—the only news agency to have a reporter in the city—kept sending dispatches that there were no signs of an uprising, but the American TV media kept "reporting" the "uprising," including the alleged gunning down of civilians by Iraqi soldiers, as fact! Then on March 27, the *Financial Times* conceded: "Allies Admit Predicament as Basra 'Uprising' Evaporates."
- On March 28, British prime minister Tony Blair announced that two British soldiers whose corpses were shown on Iraqi television had been "executed." But as the London *Guardian* (28 March) reported: "The sister of Sapper Luke Allsopp, one of the dead soldiers, yesterday accused the prime minister's office of lying about how the two died. Nina Allsopp said the army had told her family that her brother and Staff Sergeant Simon Cullingworth, both bomb disposal experts, had been killed in combat."
- When Private Jessica Lynch, who had been wounded in combat and captured by the Iraqis, was sprung from a Nasiriyah hospital by an American Special Ops unit, the front page of the right-wing *New York Daily News* (3 April) screamed, "Jessica Tortured"—parroting claims that she'd been repeatedly stabbed. As it turned out, her injuries were from combat and there was no evidence of torture.
- When two *Newsday* journalists disappeared for a few days, the U.S. claimed that they were executed by the Iraqis. A couple of days later, they turned up in Jordan after having been held by Iraqi authorities for a short period.

When the war began, Donald Rumsfeld heaped praise on the Pentagon scheme to "embed" journalists with U.S. military units as an expression of a "free press." British defence secretary Geoff Hoon intoned, "Having journalists have the protection of our armed forces is both good for journalism. It's also good for people watching." Indeed, as John Pilger remarked in a London *Independent* (6 April) article, "Like a mafia boss explaining the benefits of a protection racket, Hoon is saying: do as you are told or face the consequences."

The Big Lie campaign is intended to manipulate the population into backing the war aims of U.S. imperialism. The big papers and TV stations are capitalist enterprises, and are fundamentally loyal to their class. It is to the Marxists—those who stand for the interests of the world working class—that you can look for the truth about this bloody imperialist slaughter. ■

Spartacist Educationals

CHICAGO Sunday, April 27

1 p.m.

U.S. Imperialism on Bloody Rampage in the Post-Soviet World

Speeker: Joseph Seymour
Spartacist League Central Committee

4 p.m.

Bolshevism vs. Social Democracy, Anarchism

The Russian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

University of Illinois – Chicago (UIC)
Circle Center (CCC), Room 713
750 S. Halsted
For Information: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@lname.com

NEW YORK CITY Saturday-Sunday, April 26-27

Saturday, April 26, 5 p.m.

The Kurdish Question and the U.S. Invasion of Iraq

Speaker: Bruce André, Spartacist League

Sunday, April 27, 1 p.m.

Twelve Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

Speaker: Victor Gibbons, Spartacist League

322 West 48th Street, first floor
(E or C train to 50th Street, between 8th and 9th)
For information and readings call: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

TORONTO Sunday, April 27, Noon-5 P.M.

First Session

Russia 1917: From War to Revolution

Second Session

"New World Order": Imperialist Barbarism

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Room 5185
252 Bloor Street West (above St. George Station)
For information: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

BAY AREA Saturday-Sunday, May 3-4

Saturday, May 3, 2 p.m.

U.S. Imperialism on Bloody Rampage in the Post-Soviet World

Speaker: Joseph Seymour
Spartacist League Central Committee

Saturday, May 3, 5 p.m.

The Kurdish Question and the U.S. Invasion of Iraq

Speaker: Bruce André, Spartacist League

Sunday, May 4, 12 Noon

The Fight for a Revolutionary Workers Party

France 1968: Lessons of the Student Revolt and Workers General Strike

Speakers: Valerie West and Steve Henderson

University of California at Berkeley
Valley Life Sciences Building, Room 2040
For information: Los Angeles: (213) 380-8239,
Bay Area: (510) 839-0851, Vancouver: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: sibayarea@compuserve.com

Young Spartacus

Down With the Witchhunt Against De Genova!

A cabal of right-wingers, yellow journalists and government officials are witchhunting Columbia University professor Nicholas De Genova for advocating the military defeat of the U.S. in Iraq at a Columbia University antiwar teach-in on March 26. Among those screaming for his job are pro-war alumni threatening to withhold donations and some 66 U.S. Congressmen in an April 1 letter to Columbia's president. The *New York Post* went so far as to "fantasize about a volley of Kent State-style militia musketry rattled off in *his* general direction" (30 March). With death threats pouring in, De Genova has effectively been fired because he cannot visit campus for fear of his life. ***Down with the witchhunt! Defend De Genova!***

While before the onset of war it was trendy for academics to denounce it, the shrinking size of antiwar demos shows that there has been a shift to the right under pressure of a pro-war media barrage and government declarations. De Genova's admirable stance against the U.S. colonial rape of Iraq represents a break with the craven, flag-saluting, "support our troops" mainstream liberal antiwar movement. For that he has been singled out. The press has tried to further demonize De Genova for his courageous comment at an April 2002 pro-Palestinian campus rally: "The heritage of the victims of the Holocaust belongs to the Palestinian people. The state of Israel has no claim to the heritage of the Holocaust" (*Columbia Spectator*, 18 April 2002).

For us it is clear that the defense of the Palestinians—which the mainstream antiwar movement has buried in order to court liberals in the pro-Zionist Democratic Party—is closely linked to opposition to the war in Iraq. At the same time the U.S. is waging its war, it is funding the Zionist human-grinding machine; and the Israeli state has used the cover of the U.S. war to step up its campaign of terror against the Palestinians. ***Defend the Palestinian people! Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories!***

De Genova has also taken heat for noting at the antiwar teach-in how "U.S. patriotism is inseparable from imperial warfare and white supremacy" (*Columbia Spectator*, 27 March). The upholders of the capitalist system are offended that he attacks racism. But in fact, U.S. imperialist justifications for the invasion of Iraq—bringing civilization and "democracy" to the "savages" of the East—hark back to the days of the "white man's burden."

Steve Poellet/Columbia Spectator

De Genova's students symbolically gag themselves at Columbia sit-down protest on April 1 in defense of his free speech rights.

Pro-war forces have become increasingly provocative on campus. In Boston, UMass professor Tony Van Der Meer was arrested on April 3 after standing up to a National Guard recruiter who had screamed at an antiwar student distributing leaflets on campus: "You should be shot in the head." Campus cops were called in to aid the guardsmen and tackled Van Der Meer to the ground, enraging students who protested the unprovoked attack. ***Drop the charges against Van Der Meer now!***

Everyone who believes in freedom of speech should defend De Genova. We print below the letter in defense of De Genova submitted by the Spartacus Youth Club to the *Columbia Spectator* on 3 April.

* * *

The CU administration, the *Columbia Spectator* and media outlets nationwide, including CNN, are howling against Professor Nicholas De Genova's speech from a 26 March antiwar teach-in. Going far beyond the "peace is patriotic" drivel of the mainstream antiwar movement, he stated, "U.S. flags are the emblem of the invading war machine in Iraq today. They are the emblem of the occupying power. The only true heroes are those who find ways that help defeat the U.S. military." In a *New York Post* (1 April) opinion column, De Genova—as well as other Columbia professors—was attacked by Daniel Pipes and Jonathan Harris, organizers of the sinister Campus Watch website which targets left-leaning professors for witchhunting. A letter in the same issue of the *Post* called for De Genova to be "beaten with sticks as the administration runs him off campus." Ominously, De Genova has received over 1,000 death threats. They want to use De Genova as an example to stifle all dissent against the war.

The Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) defends De Genova and solidarizes with his remark that "Iraqi liberation can only be effected by the Iraqi people...resisting and defeating the U.S. invasion as well as overthrowing a regime whose brutality was long sustained by none other than the U.S." (*Columbia Spectator*, 31 March). We are for the military defense of Iraq while giving no political support to the Saddam Hussein regime. U.S. troops out of Iraq! Down with U.S. imperialism! We fight for class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home. The working class has the power and historic interest to rid the world of this system of capitalist exploitation and imperialist war through socialist revolution. The SYC seeks to win youth to the fight to build the workers party necessary to lead such a struggle. ■

Letter to *Spectator* by Nicholas De Genova

"Iraqi Liberation Can Only Be Effected by the Iraqi People"

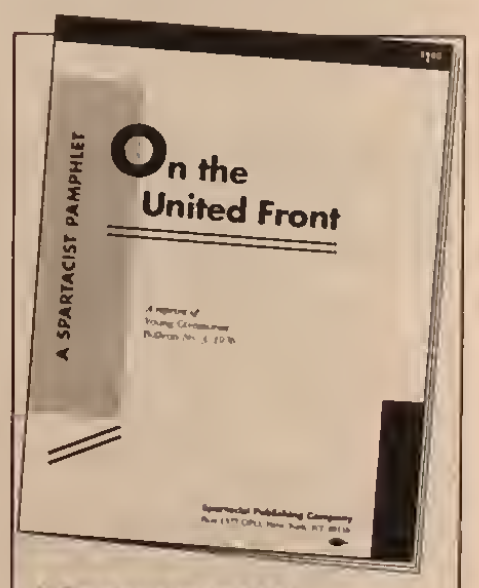
The following letter written by Columbia University assistant professor Nicholas De Genova in defense of his comments at the March 26 campus antiwar teach-in is reprinted from the Columbia Spectator *(31 March).*

Spectator, now for the second time in less than a year, has succeeded to quote me in a remarkably decontextualized and inflammatory manner. In Margaret Hunt Gram's report on the faculty teach-in against the war in Iraq (March 27, 2003), I am quoted as wishing for a million Mogadishus but with no indication whatsoever of the perspective that framed that remark. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that your Staff Editorial in the same issue, denouncing the teach-in for "dogmatism," situates me in particular as the premier example of an academic "launching tirades against anything and everything American."

In my brief presentation, I outlined a long history of U.S. invasions, wars of conquest, military occupations, and colonization in order to establish that imperialism and white supremacy have been constitutive of U.S. nation-state formation and U.S. nationalism. In that context, I stressed the necessity of repudiating all forms of U.S. patriotism. I also emphasized that the disproportionate majority of U.S. troops come from racially subordinated and working-class backgrounds and are in the military largely as a consequence of a treacherous lack of prospects for a decent life. Nonetheless, I emphasized that U.S. troops are indeed confronted with a choice—to perpetrate this war against the Iraqi people or to refuse to fight and contribute toward the defeat of the U.S. war machine.

I also affirmed that Iraqi liberation can only be effected by the Iraqi people themselves, both by resisting and defeating the U.S. invasion as well as overthrowing a regime whose brutality was long sustained by none other than the U.S. Such an anti-colonial struggle for self-determination might involve a million Mogadishus now but would ultimately have to become something more like another Vietnam. Vietnam was a stunning defeat for U.S. imperialism; as such, it was also a victory for the cause of human self-determination.

Is this a tirade against "anything and everything American"? Far from it. First, I hasten to remind you that "American" refers to all of the Americas, not merely to the United States, as U.S. imperial chauvinism would have it. More importantly, my rejection of U.S. nationalism is an appeal to liberate our own political imaginations such that we might usher in a radically different world in which we will not remain the prisoners of U.S. global domination.



A Spartacist pamphlet originally printed in 1976 as Young Communist Bulletin No. 3

$1 (16 pages)

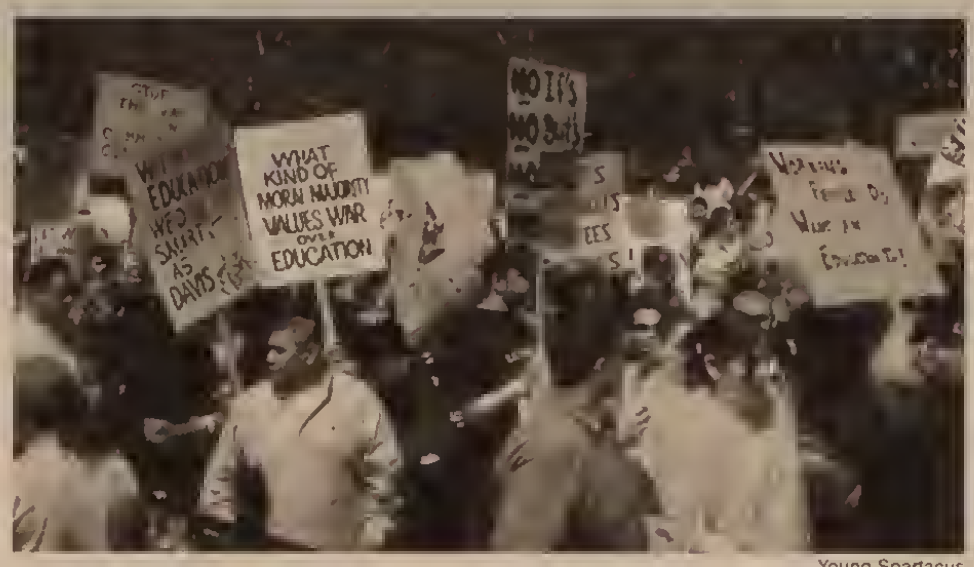
Make checks payable/mail to:
Spartacist Pub. Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

Protest Racist Budget Cuts at California Community Colleges!

LOS ANGELES—On March 28, 2,000 community college students and faculty took to the streets of downtown Los Angeles to protest the budget cuts and tuition hikes that the Democratic Party administration of Governor Gray Davis wants to impose on the backs of working-class and minority youth. A large portion of the militant protesters were black and Latino students who are directly threatened by this racist purge. Students chanted against Davis and carried gravestones naming classes that would he axed.

The budget cuts proposed by Davis for California's 108 community colleges come in the midst of a "budget crisis" caused by the profit-hungry bosses who bankrupted the economy. If enacted, the proposals would more than double tuition fees and would slash funding by *$1 billian* over the next two years. There have already been cuts in services, staff and courses. Los Angeles Community College alone cut 300 classes from the curriculum this semester.

It is estimated by the Community College League of California that some *200,000* students would he driven out of the community colleges, including more than 6,000 black and 19,000 Latino youth in Los Angeles County. In contrast to the more elite schools like UCLA and UC Berkeley, where the elimination of affirmative action in 1996 drastically reduced the number of black and Latino students, the less costly community colleges offer the only real chance most blacks and Latinos have of obtaining a higher education. Meanwhile, foreign students, already saddled with extra tuition, will face even greater costs, a measure that plays into the U.S. government's "homeland security" initiatives by discouraging foreign students from attending school in the U.S. altogether.



Young Spartacus

Students protest proposed California community college budget cuts in Los Angeles, March 28.

The "separate and unequal" funding for working-class colleges mirrors the pattern of racial segregation and class inequality in American public education as a whole. The public schools in the ghettos and barrios are chronically underfunded and overcrowded holding pens for youth. One black youth at the March 28 demonstration said bitterly, "If I can't pay for school, all I can do is work for McDonald's or join the military." That is the bitter reality for many working-class and minority youth in this country, where the racist rulers don't give a damn about educating them because there are no jobs anyway. We communists in the Spartacus Youth Club say: For free, quality, integrated public education for all!

Many of the protesters we talked to were angered that a disproportionate number of the first U.S. soldiers killed in the invasion of Iraq have been Latino and black. This is nothing new. For those who grow up in the ghettos and barrios, where jobs are few and jail cells are many, youth join the armed forces because it seems that the only way they can pay for college and get ahead is to offer themselves up as cannon fodder for the imperialist war machine.

Among the few antiwar signs at the March 28 protest, the most prominent was "Money for Books, Not Bombs." While a nice sentiment, this slogan makes

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Bible Belt Bigotry Against Gay Student

A holy trinity—the church, state and school administration—have conspired to wreck the life of Thomas McLaughlin. The administration and assorted teachers at Jacksonville Junior High School in Arkansas have decided that Jesus himself has spoken through them, telling them that Thomas must be "corrected."

When McLaughlin was in eighth grade, his science teacher overheard him refusing to deny to another boy that he was gay. The science teacher told assistant principal Sharon Hawk, who pulled him out of class and issued the ultimatum: he had until the end of the day to tell his parents he's gay, or the school would do it for him. Later that afternoon, with McLaughlin in her office, the guidance counselor called his mother and told her that Thomas was having feelings for other males.

After the "outing" the harassment only continued. Over the next 18 months, teachers quoted scripture to him and advised him to read Bible passages about homosexuality, and one made him read sections on Sodom and Gomorrah aloud to her. Teachers called him "abnormal," "sickening," "unnatural." One teacher called a conference with his parents and the principal because she objected to him being open about his sexuality, at which they told his parents outright that he was gay. Then when his typing teacher overheard him talking about some boy he thought was cute, he was sent to assistant principal Emanuel McGhee's office, where McGhee forced McLaughlin to read out loud from the Bible, gave him a tract from his church and asked Thomas to close his eyes and pray to he saved.

After McLaughlin's typing teacher heard him tell another student what happened in McGhee's office, he was suspended for two days. The administrators threatened to expel him if he talked about the suspension. The McLaughlins have now threatened to file a lawsuit with the American Civil Liberties Union against the school. *Stop the hornssment of McLaughlin! Erase all records of disciplinary actions ogninst him! For the seporation of church ond state! For full democrotic rights for hamosexuals!*

While McLaughlin's family is heing supportive, this kind of "outing" to one's family is potentially deadly. When in 1997 police officers threatened to tell a Pennsylvania youth's family that he was gay, he committed suicide.

Bigotry against gays is not just a matter of personal values or lack of education about "differences." It flows directly from a core element of capitalist society: the institution of the family. The family and the sexual division of labor within it—the root of the oppression of women in class society—embodies societal gender roles which are then reinforced by religious moral codes. Class-divided capitalist society, built upon private property and the ruling class's domination over workers and the oppressed, needs the institution of the family. It is a bedrock conservatizing force, the mechanism hy which private property is passed down and, for the workers and oppressed, a social unit to hear the burdens of society that the capitalists will not provide: health care, a decent education, food, shelter. Therefore bourgeois society cannot ultimately "legitimize" those who, like gays, fundamentally deviate from the family's restrictions.

Wintroath/NY Times

14-year-old Thomas McLaughlin with his mother.

We fight to end all laws that oppress gays and others deemed "deviant" by the American bourgeoisie's Christian anti-sex moralism. They are an invitation to torture teenagers like 14-year-old Thomas McLauglin in the name of "protecting youth." We say: *Down with reoctionnry "age of consent" laws! Government aut of the bedraam!* The working class must take up the fight for gay and women's rights as part of a fight against capitalism and all its manifestations. Central to this is the struggle for free abortion on demand. But to fully liherate women and fundamentally transform the deeply rooted attitudes toward sex roles and sexuality, a socialist revolution is necessary to lay the basis for replacing the family as an institution. A proletarian revolution would sweep away the system that spawns religious obscurantism, male chauvinism and anti-gay bigotry. We in the Spartacus Youth Clubs seek to win youth to the light to huild a party to lead the working class and all the oppressed to victory.■

ROTC Off Campus!

Join the Protest at UC Berkeley!

Saturday, April 12, 10 a.m.

(In front of Wheeler Hall, South Entrance)

Right now, the U.S. imperialist rulers are engaged in a campaign of mass murder and destruction in Iraq, to be followed by direct colonial occupation of that country. Meanwhile, the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) continues to operate under academic cover at UC Berkeley and other campuses. The military killers-in-training of ROTC are planning on showcasing themselves at "Cal Day," April 12, by rappelling down a building on UC Berkeley's campus—a truly gross spectacle considering the carnage the imperialist military is presently piling up in Iraq. ROTC chapters are direct appendages of the U.S. military—we must mobilize in militant demonstrations to drive them off campus! Students can strike a blow against the U.S. imperialist war machine by making it impossible for them to recruit on campus and organize for murder. Join and help build a united-front demonstration to demand: *ROTC Off Compus! All U.S. Troops Out of the Neor East Now!*

For more information and to endorse call: (510) 839-0851.

All U.S. Troops Out of the Near East Now!

Affirmative Action...

(continued from page 12)

liberals and reformists who uncritically hailed these programs, we emphasized from the beginning that those who look to the American capitalist state to eliminate racial and sexual discrimination were living in a fool's paradise. We seek to mobilize the working class in a fight for jobs and free, quality, integrated education for all. To reach out to the masses of unemployed minority youth and women, we call for special union recruitment and training programs. To provide real access to higher education, we call for nationalizing the private universities and for open admissions and free tuition with a state-paid living stipend for students.

Ebony

Four decades after mass civil rights protests for school integration, public education is increasingly segregated.

Supreme Court of Injustice

The assault on affirmative action began long before Bush Jr. entered the White House. In the 1978 Bakke decision, which is now presented as some kind of anti-racist beacon for at least allowing race to be a factor in university admissions, the Supreme Court outlawed quotas for black and other minority students at the University of California. As the Supreme Court prepared to hear the case, we warned: "Bakke has become the leading edge of a wave of racist reaction aimed at rolling back every gain made by blacks" ("Down With Bakke!" *WV* No. 177, 14 October 1977). In 1995, the UC Regents voted to eliminate affirmative action. In 1996, the grotesquely misnamed California Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 209) passed, eliminating affirmative action in public education and government contracting and hiring. In the following five years, black undergraduate enrollment at UC Berkeley plunged 33 percent—on top of a drop of nearly a third over the previous five years largely due to skyrocketing tuition costs.

Yet it is to an even more right-wing Supreme Court that the liberals and their left hangers-on look to as a bulwark of affirmative action today. The platform of the April 1 rally was chock-full of Democratic Party politicians like presidential hopeful Al Sharpton, who intoned, "We're not asking the court for favors. We're asking the court to make right what it made wrong." The demonstration organizers, the By Any Means Necessary coalition (BAMN) launched in 1995 by the Revolutionary Workers League, enthused in their protest call that "a victory at the Supreme Court will open up a new struggle for progress towards integration and equality in education and throughout American society." A BAMN petition posted on its Web site hailed affirmative action as "the only successful method for integrating all of this nation's universities."

To proclaim as a victory the retention of the miserable, racist status quo is truly a statement of bankruptcy. The stark truth is that there is no way to overcome entrenched racial oppression within the framework of capitalism, in the universities or elsewhere. Affirmative action programs were set up as a sop to *defuse* social struggle and in order to create and co-opt a "talented tenth" of black middle-class professionals. But these paltry, tokenistic efforts never made a dent in the deep-seated oppression of the black ghetto masses, whose condition has continued to deteriorate over the past few decades. Today, many liberal proponents of affirmative action have abandoned even talk of black equality in favor of the rhetoric of "diversity"—an aim Bush himself deems "laudable"—as though the purpose is to prepare yuppies for the real world by sitting alongside a handful of black students in the classroom.

Typically, Boston University's Glenn Loury writes in an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (29 March) that "in our racially stratified society, diversity is a necessary part of an effective college education" and that "a racially integrated elite" is essential. Scores of Fortune 500 corporations and former Pentagon bigwigs have filed *amicus* briefs on behalf of the University of Michigan. "Diversity creates stronger companies," says a vice president of the Merck pharmaceutical giant, an argument embraced even more emphatically by the military brass, who fear that a return to a Jim Crow officer caste would "hurt morale" among enlisted ranks drawn heavily—as high as 44 percent in the Army—from minorities.

At the April 1 rally, a speaker from the Detroit NAACP beat the drums for the imperialist war machine and its rape of Iraq, declaring: "If we can build democracy over there, we must also maintain democracy over here." The "democracy" U.S. imperialism has in store for the people of Iraq is a colonial version of the racist police-state terror and degradation daily meted out to black people in this country.

No decisive victory for black and working people was ever won in Congress or the courts. It took the Civil War to smash the slave system, in which teaching black people to read or write was a crime punishable by death, and to establish public education for black people in this country. It took a mass movement of millions on the streets, courageously defying Southern Democratic "Dixiecrat" governments and their truncheon-wielding cops and KKK mobs, to put an end to Jim Crow segregation in the schools. From Little Rock in 1957 to James Meredith's courageous stand as the first black student at the University of Mississippi five years later, the fight for school integration was the flashpoint of battle after battle for black equality.

But the black Democrats and reformists demobilized those struggles, straining to keep fighters against black oppression within the confines of Democratic Party electoralism, preaching reliance on the Supreme Court, on Congress, on the FBI and federal troops—on anything but the independent mobilization of the multiracial working class. The 1974 defeat, at the hands of howling mobs of racists, of a busing plan to integrate Boston's public schools opened the floodgates to a nationwide assault on school desegregation. And it was the liberals and reformists who helped set up busing for the kill, channeling the fight to defend busing into dead-end appeals for federal intervention. Barely four years after busing was smashed on the streets of Boston came the Bakke decision.

Disgustingly, some fake leftists like the Revolutionary Socialist League, the predecessor organization of Sy Landy's League for the Revolutionary Party, even joined with the racists in opposing busing and integration. As black schoolchildren were being terrorized on the streets of Boston for trying to enter an all-white school, Landy & Co. railed that integration "means the *subordination* of blacks to the dominant whites. It represents a strategy to *quell* the black struggle" (*Torch;* December 1974). Capitulating to black separatists who despaired of the possibility of integrated class struggle, these "separate-but-equal socialists" ended up in an objective bloc with outright racist scum.

We supported busing in Boston and elsewhere—demanding its extension to the overwhelmingly white, middle-class suburbs—and called on the unions to organize labor/black defense guards to repel the racists. Against the reactionary pipe dream of black separatism and the liberal integrationist lie that black people can achieve full equality within this racist capitalist system, we fight for *revolutionary integrationism*. We seek to mobilize labor's social power in defense of even such partial steps toward racial integration and equality as are possible under capitalism, understanding that full social and political equality for black people can only be achieved through workers revolution and the creation of an egalitarian socialist society.

WV Photo

Washington, D.C. protest against racist Bakke lawsuit, April 1978.

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The liberal-led civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s shattered the Jim Crow system of legalized segregation in the South, gaining formal equality for black people. But in refusing to challenge the capitalist profit system itself, it could do nothing to tackle the economic bedrock of racial oppression in jobs, education and housing. Writing of the landmark 1954 Supreme Court ruling that overturned "separate but equal" segregation, liberal journalist Jonathan Kozol stated in his book *Savage Inequalities* (1991): "In day-to-day fact, the 1954 *Brown* decision is now dead. Indeed, this nation has yet to live up to the 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision. Our schools are still separate, but they're certainly not equal." Today, more than 70 percent of black students attend predominantly minority schools, and fully one-sixth attend so-called "apartheid schools," which are almost 100 percent nonwhite.

In a *Young Spartacus* review of Kozol's book headlined "Education U.S.A.—Separate and Unequal" (*WV* No. 544, 7 February 1992), we noted:

> "The ruling class spends on educating those they exploit and oppress only what they can realize back in profit. Having taken the wrecking ball to the auto factories, gutted the steel mills and closed many of the mines, there are few jobs left for which to train the children of the working class and poor. And if educating the sons and daughters of white workers has increasingly become an expendable overhead for decaying American capitalism, the children of black workers and poor are deemed ***an expendable population***. Once a reserve army of labor to be maintained, albeit minimally, today for the racist rulers the black ghetto poor are not worth 'wasting' money on even to keep alive, much less educate."

Black youth, particularly black men, are fast becoming "missing persons" from a society that's locked them into ghettos with no exit from poverty and a likely stretch in prison other than as cannon fodder for the imperialist military. The cynically named No Child Left Behind Act siphoned off scarce funds from public schools attended by the poor into voucher programs for parochial and other private schools. Bush's current budget would slash hundreds of millions more from public education, eliminating 47 government programs entirely. Ruling against a New York City suit demanding sufficient funding to prepare students for "competitive employment" opportunities, a state appellate court recently asserted last year that learning to wrap Big Macs was just about all the "basic education" most inner-city kids needed. Lecturing that the majority of jobs "may well be low level," the judges warned that any higher standard of public education would pose a challenge "to the capitalist system in general"!

The fight for school integration and free, quality education for all must and can only be waged as part of the broader struggle for black liberation through socialist revolution. As the Spartacus Youth Club wrote in a leaflet addressed to an August 1995 protest at UC Berkeley in defense of affirmative action (*WV* No. 628, 8 September 1995):

> "We need to fight for education to be the *right* of everyone—not a privilege for the wealthy and chosen few. The only way to cut through the 'savage inequalities' of education in racist America is to fight for OPEN ADMISSIONS—with no tuition and a state stipend for all who want to go to school. Nationalize the private universities—no more class privilege in education! Massively expand remedial programs so that students deprived of the right to an education in inner-city holding pens misnamed 'schools' can catch up with those who had the advantage of well-funded suburban and private schooling....
>
> "For universities to really become public institutions of learning open to all requires a revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system itself. The Spartacus Youth Club is dedicated to building the revolutionary party, based on the multiracial working class, which is necessary to lead that struggle to victory in a socialist revolution." ■

Chin/NY Times

AP

Iraqis flee fighting in Basra (left). U.S. soldiers terrorize unarmed Iraqi.

Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

the greatest military power that has ever existed. That the Iraqi people, confronted with such overwhelming odds and saddled with a bloody regime installed by U.S. imperialism in the first place, have been able to mount any resistance is a measure of their hatred of the colonial invaders.

To this inhumane onslaught, the Bush administration has added a propaganda barrage, the lying hypocrisy and racist overtones of which seem a hybrid of the efforts of Joseph Goebbels and Pat Robertson. Not a day passes without another Bush sermon on good and evil or another paean to America's "war of liberation"—this while his administration moves to erase such liberties and freedoms that are still available to U.S. citizens. Not a day passes without a cover-up of U.S. responsibility for civilian deaths and without a fabrication of Iraqi "war crimes." In the service of sustaining the pretense of the invincibility and righteousness of American imperialism's military forces, efforts were made to silence newsman Peter Arnett for simply reporting on Iraqi TV that military resistance to the invasion had not been anticipated by the White House.

As U.S. imperialism rides roughshod over the people of Iraq, the Bush administration is making it amply clear that not only Iraqis but working people all over the world will pay for the American victory. At home, this can be seen in the attack by Oakland cops, firing wooden bullets and concussion grenades, on antiwar protesters and longshoremen yesterday. Abroad, it will mean a bloody colonial occupation of Iraq and the unleashing of the American war machine against other countries. Emboldened by the rape of Iraq, former CIA chief James Woolsey raved that this was the onset of a "Fourth World War" (the third being the Cold War). He went on to declare: "As we move toward a new Middle East over the years and, I think, over the decades to come... we will make a lot of people very nervous. Our response should be, 'Good! We want you nervous. We want you to realize now, for the fourth time in 100 years, this country and its allies are on the march'."

From the outset of the drive to war we have forthrightly stood for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. attack without giving any political support to the Saddam Hussein regime. In contrast, the reformist organizers of antiwar protests, bleating "No to war" alongside the handful of Democratic Party politicians they have pursued, have served to mask the fact that it is in the interest of workers and the oppressed, especially in the U.S., to take a clear stand against U.S. imperialism.

In a 19 March Spartacist League/U.S. statement, issued the night the bombing began, we wrote: "Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe." Our call for class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers is premised on the understanding that there can be no unity between the exploiters and exploited in the fight against imperialism and war. The bloodbath being perpetrated in Iraq underlines the urgency of forging a revolutionary workers party committed to the defeat of U.S. imperialism through socialist revolution.

U.S. Imperialism Menaces the World

It is the intention of America's imperialist rulers to perpetuate and extend their domination of the world, now possible as a result of the capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR in 1991-92. But the way this war is being waged is very much the product of an arrogant, reactionary, insular and simple-minded administration that actually seems to believe that the world's peoples eagerly seek its "liberating" interventions. These god-like illusions quickly encountered reality in Iraq. It is not hyperbole to call heroic the actions of those Iraqis who attack tanks and Bradley vehicles in pickup trucks armed, at best, with .50-calibre machine guns. Or the actions of those who directly confront Marine units with only rifles in hand, or even of those who exterminate themselves to kill the invaders. Iraqi Shi'ites resident in Jordan, no lovers of Saddam, have returned in busloads to the hell that is home to fight the American/British colonialists.

AP

March 28: Antiwar demonstration in Teheran, Iran.

In the aftermath of a suicide attack that killed four U.S. soldiers, a Pentagon official declared, "Everyone is now seen as a combatant until proven otherwise." What this meant was seen in the killing of at least seven women and children, as an American soldier shot up the van they were traveling in. Three British soldiers were sent home in custody for complaining about unwarranted civilian deaths caused by trigger-happy U.S. troops. Since then, a convoy of Russian diplomats on their way to Syria was attacked and a convoy of U.S.-allied Kurds in the north was bombed. When an American A-10 pilot opened fire on a British convoy on March 28, killing a British soldier and also shooting dead one 12-year-old Iraqi, another British soldier complained of the pilot: "He had absolutely no regard for human life. I believe he was a cowboy." In a piece in the London *Independent* (6 April), British correspondent John Pilger wrote:

> "We now glimpse the forbidden truths of the invasion of Iraq. A man cuddles the body of his infant daughter; her blood drenches them. A woman in black pursues a tank, her arms outstretched; all seven in her family are dead. An American Marine murders a woman because she happens to be standing next to a man in uniform. 'I'm sorry,' he says, 'but the chick got in the way'."

These atrocities are not just the result of trigger-happy soldiers. As Pilger goes on to write:

> "These Anglo-American invasions of weak and largely defenceless nations are meant to demonstrate the kind of world the US is planning to dominate by force, with its procession of worthy and unworthy victims and the establishment of American bases at the gateways of all the main sources of fossil fuels. There is a list now. If Israel has its way, Iran will be next; and Cuba, Libya, Syria and even China had better watch out. North Korea may not be an immediate American target, because its threat of nuclear war has been effective. Ironically, had Iraq kept its nuclear weapons [*sic*: Iraq never had nuclear weapons], this invasion probably would not have taken place. That is the lesson for all governments at odds with Bush and Blair: nuclear-arm yourself quickly."

Washington is well into the planning for a postwar Iraq. Current proposals are to divide the country into three administrative regions, similar to when it was part of the Ottoman Empire, before the British imperialists forcibly amalgamated the Shi'ite, Sunni and Kurdish areas into an artificial entity that became Iraq. While hundreds of CIA-sponsored Iraqi "freedom fighters" are being parachuted into the country to act as an auxiliary to the American occupation, the U.S. has already made it clear that the country will be under direct military rule for at least six months. The quality of the "native" stooges can be assessed by a current leading candidate, one Ahmed Chalabi, an Iraqi-born financier (who has not seen Baghdad in over 45 years) touted by Vice President Cheney and who, in recent years, was convicted of bank fraud in Jordan. His projected administrative area is, of course, finance. The Iraqi "opposition" has dutifully pledged to denationalize the state monopoly on oil to enable a takeover by American oil companies.

"Cronies Set to Make a Killing," declared a headline in the London *Observer* (6 April), reporting on how the "reconstruction" of Iraq is being doled out to Bechtel and other corporations with close ties to the Bush administration. The docking facilities at the port town of Umm Qasr have been given to the anti-union Stevedoring Services of America, which is a lavish contributor to the Republican Party and which headed last autumn's lockout of West Coast longshoremen. The corporate greed that has led to job losses, wage-slashing and the disappearance of pensions over the last decade in this country will be magnified 100 times through the lens of U.S. colonial occupation.

While America's overwhelming military preponderance all but assured quick victory in the invasion, the Iraqi military resistance portends what is likely to be a long, bloody and uncertain occupation. The 1898 Spanish-American War was also an easy win for the U.S., but the subsequent decades-long colonial occupation of the Philippines was met with a series of insurgencies, including one in which up to a half million Filipinos were slaughtered between 1899 and 1902.

The current spectacle of the lesser great powers—France, Germany, Russia—that led UN "opposition" to the war now demanding their place at the trough of Iraqi oil would be humorous did it not augur the rape of that country once it has fallen. National security adviser Condoleezza Rice stated bluntly, as the *New*

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Iraq...

(continued from page 7)

York Times (5 April) put it, that "the American-led alliance had shed 'life and blood' in the Iraq war and would reserve for itself—and not the United Nations—the lead role in creating a new Iraqi government." This is a statement to the European powers to expect not a penny from the postwar "reconstruction" bonanza.

Down With Racist Colonialist Conquest!

Echoing the typical complaints of all imperialist colonizers, native resisters to such depredations are seen by Bush & Co. as bloodthirsty cowards only capable of attacking from ambush and then scurrying away to hide among the populace (perhaps because they, unlike the invaders, are part of the populace). Such insidious elements then, in the eyes of the imperialists, become responsible for the mass executions of innocents forced on the "decent" conquerors. And no world power—save, perhaps, Nazi Germany—has massacred more innocents under these racist premises than the U.S., which in Korea and Vietnam alone slaughtered six million people.

U.S. imperialism is waging war against the weak, and the weak have no other way to fight back than from ambush. It is interesting to remember that the American Revolution was essentially won by those who, dressed in rags and animal pelts, ambushed the British forces and then melted back into the swamps, the forests and the hills. A prime example of this was South Carolina's Francis Marion, known as the "Swamp Fox." After his regular army regiment was defeated by the British, he organized a band of guerrillas that staged bold raids over swampy terrain, often defeating larger bodies of British troops. By demonizing Iraqi resistance as "terror," the U.S. imperialists have reduced the American Revolution to a terrorist enterprise!

Predictably, to follow in the wake of the invasion of Iraq are the Christian missionaries to "civilize the savages"—in other words, religious bigots who have been in the forefront of support for the Bush administration, in this case notably the Southern Baptist Convention and Samaritan's Purse, led by Franklin Graham, the son of evangelist Billy Graham. The leaders of the former recently characterized Muhammad as a "pedophile" and "terrorist" while Graham has been satisfied to label Islam as "wicked" and "violent." It is accurate, but not enough, to say that the forerunners of these zealots were steeped in unwashed ignorance until those under Islam's sway recivilized Europe. It is more to the point that their minions are a reservoir of racist reaction who, not infrequently, find religious adherence compatible with membership in or sympathy for the KKK.

Iraqi resistance to the colonial invasion has fueled increasingly militant, mass demonstrations against American imperialism throughout the Near East. These have not, in all cases, been led by Muslim religious reactionaries, especially in Egypt where just resentment against national oppression has, in part, been led by left nationalists who hark back to the days of Gamal Abdel Nasser in the 1950s and '60s. Referring to the current Egyptian president, many of the protesters chanted, "Mubarak leave!" Bush's current consultants for mopping up urban resistance are British (with recent experience in Northern Ireland) and Israeli "experts," past and, in the case of Israel, present masters in turning whole cities into concentration camps. At base, the driving force of outrage in the Near East is the hideous and potentially genocidal national oppression of Palestinians by Israel.

WV Photo

April 5: Spartacist/Labor Black League contingent at Harlem antiwar protest.

But history and current experience show that neither the left nationalism of a Nasser nor its current right-wing variant in Iraq can provide an answer to imperialist domination. That can only be accomplished by a proletarian revolution in the area that inspires class overturns throughout the region, including Israel, where currently a nationwide general strike against government-sponsored cutbacks is posed. What is needed to achieve self-determination for all the region's national minorities and to throw off the yoke of imperialist domination is a series of workers revolutions to sweep away all the capitalist regimes of the region and create a socialist federation of the Near East.

The conquest of power by the proletariat does not complete the socialist revolution, but only opens it, by changing the direction of social development. Short of the extension of the revolution internationally, particularly to the advanced, industrialized imperialist centers, that social development will be arrested and ultimately reversed, as happened in the case of the Soviet Union. This underscores the need to forge Leninist-Trotskyist parties of socialist revolution as part of a working-class communist international to lead the proletariat in struggle against all forms of oppression, exploitation and injustice.

The War at Home

With the start of combat in Iraq, there has been an increase in patriotic sentiment and support for the war in the U.S. and Britain, accompanied by increasing government moves to quash protest. That this patriotic upswing has been relatively modest gives testimony both to continuing reservations about the justice of this colonial venture and to the fact that working people in both countries remain primarily concerned about more mundane matters, like the ability to remain employed and survive from day to day in the bleak economic circumstances they face. Among black people in the U.S., however, opposition to the war remains strong and unchanged. A recent *Washington Post*/ABC News poll indicates that opposition to the war stands at 61 percent of the black population as contrasted to 20 percent of whites.

A black academic told the *Washington Post* (25 March), "Black Americans are routinely told that there's not enough money for housing, medicine, education and rebuilding the inner city, but...considerable sums can be raised for war." It is true that war costs will be used as an excuse to continue to savage such meager social benefits as are available in this country.

National Geographic

British troops enter Baghdad, March 1917.

Just as importantly, most black people understand that Bush is president only as the result of a swindle. Indeed, it is likely that had not Bush's brother, Jeb, organized to exclude black people from voting in Florida, Al Gore would have won the election. It was under the Clinton/Gore administration that welfare and many other social services were axed while the prison population, which today numbers over two million, soared. And it was under Clinton/Gore that the starvation and devastation of Iraq continued apace. In 1996, Clinton's secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, was asked what she thought about the half million Iraqi children who had died as a result of the blockade. She replied, "We think the price is worth it." Two years later, Clinton signed into law the "Iraq Liberation Act," which sailed through the Senate with unanimous approval. That same year, Clinton launched a massive bombing campaign against Baghdad, the biggest of a number of air assaults against Iraq under his administration. Most recently, the $80 billion war appropriations bill passed with the support of every Democrat in the Senate and the opposition of fewer than a dozen Democrats in the House.

Speaking at a rally in defense of affirmative action in Washington, D.C. on April 1, the president of the Detroit NAACP declared of the Iraq war, "If we can build democracy there, we must also maintain democracy over here." The "democracy" that this liberal wants to maintain is the "democracy" that consigns millions of black children to abject poverty and malnutrition. One in eight young black men is currently in prison and more than one in four young black men can expect to be imprisoned at some point in their lives. In fact, some black people identify, as the *New York Times* (27 March) put it, "with poor Iraqis, whom they saw simply as people of color being attacked by a rich, and largely white, American government."

The development of American imperialism began shortly after the Civil War and emerged on the world arena with the 1898 Spanish-American War, launched as a mission to "civilize savages," a racist battle cry that Bush now echoes. It is no accident that that development was accompanied by the entrenchment of Jim Crow legislation and lynch law "justice," including racist mob riots against black people. The plight of the black population is rooted in the race/caste oppression that is the cornerstone of the American imperialist order.

Imperialism is, at base, business, the expression of the desire by a nation's capitalist rulers to extend their capacity to reap profits. As Lenin put it, politics is concentrated economics. The imperialists will not sacrifice their guns for the benefit of the people any more than a boss would sacrifice profits to provide job security and a decent living for workers. It is only struggle against the system of capitalist exploitation that can make inroads against its depredations and only the overthrow by socialist revolution of that system that can end, for all time, exploitation and war.

This social overturn cannot be accomplished without breaking the ties of the working class and black people to the Democratic Party and forging a party of proletarian revolution. This is no small task. While the Republicans offer only thinly disguised contempt for working people, and are openly racist, the Democrats offer false promises and words of support for racial equality as they carry out the dictates of the capitalist order. In this regard, the liberal black Democrats are invaluable to the capitalist rulers in maintaining the adherence of black people to this system. While, for the most part, white contenders for the Democratic nomination for the presidency have dropped any criticism of the war, black Democrats like Al Sharpton have continued their qualified opposition to the war, now tempered by calls for support of "our boys."

For these black politicians, support for "our troops" is a statement of allegiance to the American imperialist order. But for the black masses, in many cases, the troops literally are their sons and daughters. As one black New Yorker told the *New York Times* (27 March), "We're going to be in

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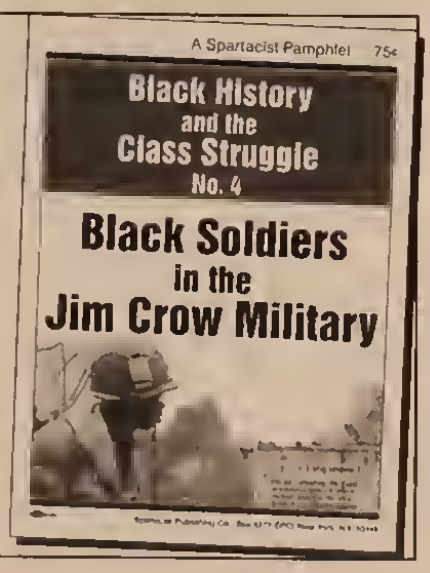

the front lines—blacks and minorities." The fact is that blacks compose some 29 percent of the active enlisted ranks of the U.S. Army and over 20 percent of the Navy; 18 percent of the Air Force and 16 percent of the Marines—i.e., well above their demographic weight. It is difficult to find a black person who does not have a close relative in the armed services. Many poor, minority and working-class youth are induced to join the military in search of financial, educational and employment benefits. As a result, the military is a concentrated expression of the seething racial and class contradictions in U.S. civil society.

As communist revolutionaries, we are not for meaningless deaths whether, in this context, American or Iraqi. It is America's rulers who bear all the responsibility for sending young working-class and minority men and women to kill and be killed in order to extend the power and profits of U.S. imperialism. The Iraqi soldiers and others who are resisting the imperialist invasion are simply defending their homes and country. It must be recognized that support for "our boys" necessarily entails support for what they are doing, i.e., for a particular manifestation of U.S. imperialism's drive to subjugate all nations to its mandates.

The "Left" at War—The Price of Class Collaboration

Predictably, most of the left, some of whom would describe themselves as socialist but whose real aspiration is to achieve sufficient weight to influence bourgeois policy, have capitulated to the —less than virulent—increase in patriotic fervor. From the beginning, the ersatz socialist builders of protest against the war, primarily Workers World Party (through its International ANSWER coalition) and the International Socialist Organization (ISO), have argued that the largest possible and, therefore, most effective movement can only be built on the basis of slogans palatable to all—"No to war" or, in the case of the upcoming April 12 ANSWER protest in D.C., "Bring the troops home now." What this has meant and could only mean is building a coalition with the soft wing of the bourgeoisie, i.e., with liberal Democrats.

The essence of such politics is most clearly expressed by the more right-wing antiwar coalitions that have come to the fore as the war drew closer, like Win Without War and United for Peace and Justice, which sponsored the mammoth February 15 demonstration in New York. Leslie Cagan of United for Peace says, "Our opposition to the war doesn't mean that we're opposed to the troops. We want to support them by bringing them home." Win Without War's Medea Benjamin, director of Global Exchange, recently explained that their aim is to work "with the progressive wing of the Democratic party. We want to reclaim the right to portray the flag. For all those who want to show their sense of patriotism and oppose the war, we want to create a space for that" (London *Guardian*, 1 April). Like the antiwar Democrats invited onto ANSWER platforms, these types are unabashed defenders of the interests of U.S. imperialism, but propose other means than war to subjugate Iraq.

"Bringing the boys home" did not end the Vietnam War, which continued for some years after U.S. troops were withdrawn. The war ended only when the North Vietnamese Army and the southern National Liberation Front rolled over the remaining forces of U.S. imperialism's puppet forces in the South. The military defeat of U.S. imperialism at the hands of Vietnam's workers and peasants was a victory for working people and the oppressed the world over, not least in the U.S. What the liberal Vietnam antiwar movement did succeed in doing was to deflect many of the millions of youth radicalized by that war and the civil rights movement back into the arms of the Democratic Party, thereby undercutting a significant opportunity for the development of a revolutionary workers party in this country.

These are the same treacherous politics that are being pushed by the liberal antiwar movement of today. Despite the occasional lip service to socialism in their newspapers, in their antiwar coalitions on the ground Workers World, the ISO and the various other fake-socialist organizations push anything and everything but socialist revolution as the way to end imperialist war.

Real opposition to imperialist war is impossible without opposition to the system that breeds it, an opposition that must, in the final analysis, be based on the mobilization of the working class, the only force capable of challenging and overturning bourgeois rule. In the course of sharp class struggle and through the instrumentality of a revolutionary party that patiently educates the working class in the understanding not only of its social power but of its historic interests, the workers will become conscious of themselves as a class fighting for itself and for all the oppressed against the entire capitalist system and its government.

The representatives of the ruling class, Republican and Democrat, will do everything in their power to forestall and oppose any independent mobilization of the working class. From the beginnings of this war drive, the Spartacist League has opposed class collaborationism and called for class struggle against American imperialism's rulers. What the reformists are, in reality, promoting is faith in the reformability of blood-drenched U.S. imperialism. Our commitment is to building an international revolutionary working-class party to lead the proletariat to power, consigning this whole system of exploitation, racial oppression and imperialist war to the dustbin of history.■

Oakland Police Attack...

(continued from page 1)

spokesman for Oakland's "liberal" mayor Jerry Brown. The ILWU itself has been in the cross hairs of the federal government since last summer's contract battle, when the Bush administration threatened to call out troops to break any longshore strike as a threat to "national security."

The direct link between the war against Iraq and the war on labor in the U.S. was brought home with a vengeance in Oakland today. The cop attack on the protesters began at the American President Lines terminal and resumed when picketers were forced down to the Stevedoring Services of America (SSA) terminal, where a ship was docked and longshoremen were standing by. The SSA, which last year led the shipping bosses' union-busting drive against the ILWU, has now been awarded a contract by the Bush administration to operate the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr.

As U.S. tanks roll over Baghdad, the rulers of the American empire are further emboldened to roll over any manifestation of dissent at home. More than 2,000 protesters who took to the streets in the Bay Area when the cruise missiles were launched against Iraq were rounded up and thrown behind bars. Now the protesters at the docks are given the kind of treatment regularly meted out to the black population of the Bay Area by the cops, like the notorious thugs in blue, the Riders.

Wielding the criminal attack on the World Trade Center to advance their own ambitions for total world domination, the U.S. imperialists' "war on terror" took first aim at immigrants of Near Eastern and South Asian descent. Then they declared that anyone the imperial president deems to be an "enemy combatant" can be stripped of all constitutional rights and effectively disappeared.

AP

Not Baghdad but Port of Oakland.

This can and must be fought! Last February 9, ILWU Local 10 was the core of a united-front protest initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and Bay Area Labor Black League in defense of immigrant rights and in opposition to the police-state USA-Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act (MSA). The cop attack on ILWU members and antiwar protesters is the type of "security" the MSA was designed to enforce, keeping the ports working for capitalist profit and the imperialist military machine. Labor's enormous social power must be brought to bear *now* to stop the government's attack on the very right to protest the bloody colonial war and occupation of Iraq.

* * *

Letters demanding that all charges against the antiwar protesters be dropped should be faxed to: Mayor Jerry Brown, (510) 238-4731, and Alameda County District Attorney Thomas Orloff, (510) 271-5157.■

Budget Cuts...

(continued from page 5)

it sound as if all that is needed is for the government to change its priorities. But the sobering truth is that the state is committed to the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Imperialist wars are fought to advance the fundamental interests of the capitalist class and cannot be wished away.

Reformist groups like the International Socialist Organization and Workers World Party push variants of this slogan because they think that capitalism can be pressured into becoming progressive. This is a delusion! To allocate resources for people rather than profits requires breaking the power of the bourgeoisie through socialist revolution.

On March 28, the main speakers were Democratic Party politicos and a few union leaders who made a point of not mentioning anything about the war, except one speaker who obscenely declared about a community college student killed in Iraq: "We have done our part, so Sacramento should do theirs." The politicians made their harangues about shifting the burden of the budget cuts from the community colleges to other institutions while complaining that their fellow Democrat Gray Davis is succumbing to pressure from big financial constituencies.

But the Democratic Party is no friend of labor, blacks, immigrants and students. No less than the Republicans, it is a bourgeois party committed to preserving and administering racist capitalist class rule. The union leaders who shared the platform with the Democrats peddle a suicidal alliance between labor and capital that is the foremost obstacle to any real mobilization of working people against this rotten racist system.

The only way students are going to win their demands is through linking their struggles with all the victims of this vicious ruling class, particularly workers who make the economy run and have the power to bring it to a grinding halt. To win even the right to a decent education requires breaking with the Democrats and fighting against the entire capitalist system. ***Far open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students! Nationalize the private universities! Abolish the administration—the colleges and universities should be run by those who work and study there!***

The SYCs seek to win youth to the perspective of building the multiracial workers party necessary to lead the struggle against the capitalist order. Join us in the fight for a future without exploitation, racist oppression and imperialist war!■

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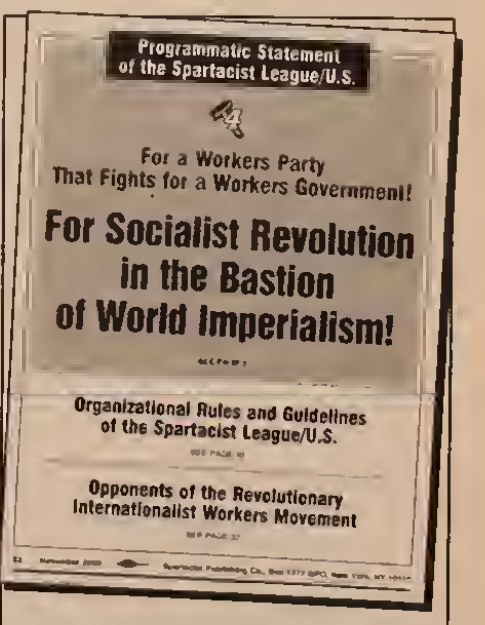

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Zionist Rulers Step Up Anti-Palestinian Terror

On March 22, several hundred thousand demonstrators in New York City came out to protest the U.S. war on Iraq. Only a week later, barely 500 protesters gathered at the same site in defense of the Palestinians. The Spartacist League contingent at this demonstration demanded, *Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories! For a socialist federation of the Near East!* Antiwar activists who genuinely want to fight this rapacious imperialist system must take up the defense of the Palestinian people against the U.S.-backed Zionist rulers.

But the reformist organizations—like Workers World Party and the International Socialist Organization—heavily involved in the antiwar coalitions had less than a token presence at the Palestinian protest. With most antiwar protest organizers looking to appeal to the rabidly pro-Israel Democratic Party, the Palestinian cause has largely been buried at protests against the war in Iraq. And the ongoing Zionist war of terror against the Palestinian people has largely been buried in the American bourgeois media.

After a brief lull at the start of the U.S. attack on Iraq, the Zionist state has renewed its bloody mass terror campaign. On April 2, Israeli troops broke into a UN-administered girls school in the refugee camp in the West Bank town of Tulkarm, summoned the male population there in the middle of the night and loaded up to 3,000 people into trucks to be dumped at a nearby camp for three days. This was the first mass expulsion of Palestinians since at least the start of the current Israeli military campaign more than two years ago. Israeli liberal Uri Avnery called the operation "an army exercise and test to see how the world, the media, and the Israeli public would react. And there was no reaction, which proves that it can be done. The people on the trucks could easily have been taken to the Jordan River bridges"—i.e., expelled from the Occupied Territories entirely.

More than 20 Palestinians have been killed since the Iraq war began, including a 14-year-old boy in Jenin and a 10-year-old girl in Bethlehem. Four Palestinians were killed on April 3 in the southern Gaza refugee camp of Rafah, where the Israelis stormed in with assault helicopters, bulldozers and 40 tanks. The same day, on the outskirts of East Jerusalem the earthmoving machines arrived at dawn and demolished more than a dozen homes and buildings as part of the ongoing Israeli campaign to purge Palestinians from Jerusalem.

Only weeks after an Israeli bulldozer crushed to death 23-year-old American peace activist Rachel Corrie, two other members of the International Solidarity Movement were shot by the Israeli military on April 5. Brian Avery, an American, was hit in the face by a bullet from an armored vehicle as he stood in the street, and Lassel Smith, a Dane, was hit in the leg. The Zionist state wants to underline that nothing will stand in the way of its unremitting terror campaign against the Palestinian population.

In the midst of this stepped-up repression against the Palestinians, some 100,000 municipal workers organized in the Histadrut labor federation walked off the job, leaving Israel's rulers to scream about the terrorist threat posed by uncollected garbage. While some have returned to work, the Histadrut is also threatening a general strike to begin on April 10, which would bring out over 500,000 workers and shut down ports, airlines, railways, defense industries, banks and hospitals, as well as many large private companies. The strikes are directed at a plan by the right-wing Sharon government and its finance minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to push through legislation imposing huge wage cuts and layoffs in order to finance the war and ultra-Zionist settlements in the Occupied Territories amid a deepgoing economic crisis.

The current strikes underline that the Israeli working class—Hebrew and Arab—is the Achilles' heel of the Zionist state. Israeli workers now see arrayed against them the same government that orders the brutal suppression of the Palestinian people. Hebrew-speaking workers must be broken from anti-Arab chauvinism and won to the defense of the Palestinians. And Arab, Persian and Kurdish workers throughout the region must be won away from all forms of nationalism and religious fundamentalism and to a program of international class unity. The urgent task at hand is the construction of internationalist workers parties committed to sweeping away the entire rotting edifice of capitalist class rule in the Near East.■

Mass Strike Rocks Israel

United Airlines Swindle

Bankruptcy and Union-Busting

Reuters

Already reeling from the economic recession, the airline industry is going deeper into a tailspin. On top of the quarter-million-plus workers who have lost their jobs or seen their wages and benefits slashed after September 2001, airline workers are being further hit as fuel costs rise and reservations plummet—down by 40 percent on international flights and 20 percent domestically. The six largest domestic airlines have announced schedule cutbacks of as much as 12 percent. Carrier after carrier has threatened to declare bankruptcy in order to rip up labor contracts and extract more concessions from the workers, often using the "war on terror" and now the war on Iraq to invoke "force majeure" or "act of god" clauses in union contracts. The Air Transport Association trade group projects that 70,000 more jobs will be axed due to the Iraq war. At the same time, commercial airliners are being used to transport troops and war matériel for the bloody U.S. colonial invasion and occupation of Iraq.

What is posed is an industry-wide showdown between the airline corporations and their highly unionized workforce. United Airlines, the second-largest domestic and international carrier, declared bankruptcy in December after already having squeezed its five unions for billions of dollars of concessions. The airline bosses have repeatedly turned to the bankruptcy courts for plain and simple union-busting. Now United intends to wring $2.56 billion a year from its 72,000 workers by imposing new contracts that would slash wages, vacations and down-time pay and sweep many work rules aside, undermining the safety of workers and passengers by reducing maintenance and repair crews while increasing their workloads.

On April 4, new six-year contracts were accepted by the leaders of the dispatchers and flight attendants unions, who had already agreed to a 9 percent wage cut in January. Later this month, the 8,800-strong Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) at United will vote on making permanent a 29 percent wage cut which its leadership accepted in January as a "temporary" measure. Meanwhile, United CEO Glenn Tilton announced he would take a 14 percent pay cut this year in his base salary, which accounted for all of some 3 percent of his total take of *$9.65 million* last year!

The 10,500 mechanics and utility workers organized in International Association of Machinists District Lodge (IAM) 141-M, however, have tenaciously resisted the company's extortionate demands at every turn, beginning with the union contract signed last March and again in November when the company demanded concessions before its bankruptcy filing. When the IAM refused to negotiate over concessions this January, a bankruptcy judge imposed pay cuts of 14 percent anyway. Then on March 25, United management retaliated against the union by invoking "force majeure" to close a state-of-the-art maintenance base in Indianapolis, laying off all 1,148 IAM members.

United's attacks on the unions utterly expose the fraud of the company's "Employee Stock Ownership Plan" (ESOP), which the IAM and ALPA tops sold to their memberships in 1994. From the beginning, this setup was a quintessential expression of the class-collaborationist program of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which preaches the lie that labor and capital have common interests. Billed as giving the unions a "controlling interest" in the company, the ESOP traded huge pay cuts and other givebacks totaling $5 billion, a six-year no-strike pledge, an agreement to cross the picket lines of other striking airline workers and massive contracting out of work for 55 percent of company shares and two union representatives on the board of directors.

When the ESOP deal was announced, we wrote in "Phony 'Worker Ownership' at United Airlines" (*WV* No. 593, 4 February 1994):.

> "Even if the workers had 100 percent, it wouldn't make a fundamental difference. Workers have no control whatsoever over the capitalist market, which is inherently anarchic. At the first financial difficulty they would be at the mercy of the banks.... To 'save jobs' by making one airline 'more competitive' is to drive down the living standards of all."

In the aftermath of the company's bankruptcy filing, the workers' share is less than 20 percent, and the stock itself is worth practically nothing.

US Airways has already used bankruptcy to wrest massive concessions from its unions. Last month, American Airlines, the largest carrier since its acquisition of the remnants of TWA, threatened bankruptcy to wring $1.8 billion in concessions from its unions. Hawaiian Air, the 12th largest airline, recently filed for bankruptcy. Management at Continental, which just laid off 1,200 workers, Northwest and Delta have all publicly threatened bankruptcy filings by the end of this year. While they wield this sword over the heads of the unions, the airline bosses are also strictly enforcing disciplinary rules and "random" drug testing, aiming to intimidate the entire workforce and to weed out union militants.

Following the criminal attacks on the World Trade Center, the government doled out some $15 billion in cash and loan guarantees to the airlines, which were already in the grip of an economic crisis predating 9/11. Now as part of the Iraq war budget, Congress has approved another $3 billion in government welfare for the airline corporations. Air transport is a crucial part of the economy, and by the same token the airline unions potentially have enormous strategic power. It is to keep that power in check that the capitalists mobilize their state apparatus against the airline unions, from bankruptcy courts to anti-labor laws like the Railway Labor Act (RLA), which prohibits airline unions from striking when their contracts expire, forcing them through a maze of "mediation," "cooling off" periods and the like.

Now the airline bosses are pressuring Congress to strengthen the RLA by amending it to require binding arbitration of union contracts. In response, the union tops are cravenly lobbying capitalist politicians, particularly the Democrats who pose as "friends" of labor, to keep the original law in place. It was under Democratic president Jimmy Carter that the airlines were deregulated in 1978, paving the way for 25 years of union-busting attacks. And it was Bill Clinton who used the RLA to stop a strike by American Airlines pilots in 1997.

In the face of the anti-union onslaught, there must be a unified struggle by the IAM, Teamsters, pilots and flight attendants unions. But the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats are committed to the "profitability" of the airlines, for which they have repeatedly sacrificed hard-won union gains. This has led some frustrated workers to embrace the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association, a craft union that has launched decertification drives against the IAM, threatening to further divide and weaken the workforce. What is needed is *one industry-wide union* of all airline workers!

Imperialist military adventures abroad go hand in hand with attacks on the working class and minorities at home. What labor needs is a leadership that understands that it cannot fight for the workers' cause if it embraces the profit system of the capitalist class enemy, its political parties and imperialist wars. It is through the class struggles of the workers that such a labor leadership will be forged and a workers party built that can lead the fight for a workers government, the only way to put an end to capitalism's economic chaos, racism and wars.■

Death Row Lawyer Axed for Winning

Texas

For nearly a quarter century, the forces of Texas "law and order" have been trying to take the life of Johnny Paul Penry, a man with an IQ of 54 who was orphaned and brutally abused as a child. Although sentenced to death three times for a 1979 murder, Penry has held the hangmen at bay for two decades, largely through the hard work of his lawyer John Wright. Two times Wright has managed to get the United States Supreme Court to overturn Penry's death sentences, based on the trial courts' continuing failure to take Penry's mental retardation into account in jury instructions.

So after the third death sentence was imposed on Penry last summer, Polk County Judge Elizabeth Coker decided to knock Wright out of the case, denying his routine request for appointment to handle Penry's next round of appeals. Coker's supposed basis for switching lawyers is that on appeal Penry might need to argue that Wright mishandled the trial, creating a supposed "conflict of interest"! As legal ethics expert Stephen Gillers put it: "This is Alice in Wonderland law" (*New York Times*, 24 March). In fact, Wright was kicked off the case because he has fought tooth and nail for his client, and was winning. Coming from a state notorious for sticking capital defendants with lawyers who are untrained, poorly paid, and in some cases even sleep through their clients' trials, this Texas judge's professed concerns about the quality of Wright's advocacy are nothing but a grim joke.

But it gets even more sinister. The new attorney in whose hands Judge Coker chose to place Penry's fate is a Texas law professor named Stephen Taylor, who just last summer was ***helping the prosecutors*** build their case ***against*** Penry! The trial prosecutor has admitted he consulted with Taylor repeatedly to brainstorm strategies for dealing with Penry's mental disability, which is sure to be a central issue on appeal.

"Please move quickly to withdraw from my case," Penry wrote in a letter to Taylor. "I do not want you to handle my appeal." But Judge Coker, who last summer ruled that Penry *is* mentally competent enough to be executed, turned around in December and decided Penry may *not* be competent to choose his own lawyer! In a grotesque Catch-22, the prosecutors are suggesting that if Penry can figure out that he doesn't want a prosecution agent as his "defense" lawyer, that proves he is not really mentally retarded.

While Texas is exceptionally notorious, this gross outrage is not just some Texas aberration. As novelist and attorney Scott Turow pointed out in *The New Yorker* (6 January), many of those on death row are there "essentially for the crime of having the wrong lawyers." In "Up North" Illinois, a series of highly publicized cases where innocent people got death sentences led the outgoing governor, George Ryan, to commute the sentences of the state's entire death row population in January (see "Abolish the Racist Death Penalty! Illinois Governor Empties Death Row," *WV* No. 796, 31 January). Meanwhile, in Pennsylvania, former Black Panther, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal still sits on death row after being railroaded for the 1981 killing of a Philly cop, even after the man who actually shot the cop confessed.

The death penalty is the apex of a whole system of state repression which is rigged from top to bottom to protect the interests of the capitalist rulers against working people and the oppressed. We Marxists oppose the death penalty in principle, for the guilty as well as the innocent, because we do not accord the government the right to say who lives and who dies. And in this deeply racist and class-divided society, it is black people, Latinos, and overwhelmingly the poor (like Penry) who get the death sentences. The multiracial labor movement should mobilize its ranks to get rid of the barbaric system of capital punishment. In doing so, they will strike a blow against the whole frame-up system. ***Abolish the racist death penalty!*** ■

WV Photo

August 2001 protest in San Francisco on behalf of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Egypt...

(continued from page 12)

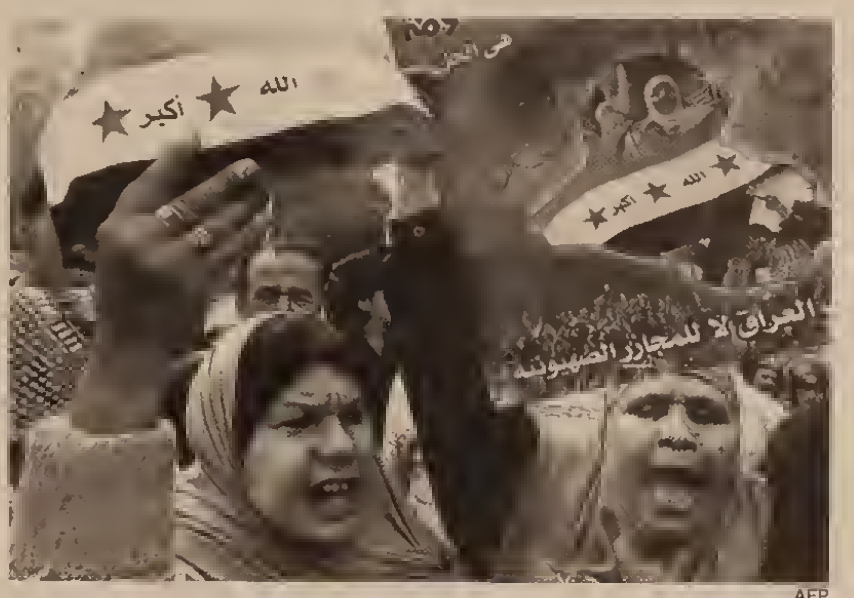
in Pakistan, Iran, Yemen, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and "liberated" Afghanistan, among others. It is a measure of the pervasiveness of anti-gay bigotry in these societies that there is no word in Arabic, Urdu or Farsi for homosexual that is not demeaning or derogatory.

Nor is the industrially advanced Christian West a safe haven for gays and lesbians. The murder of Matthew Shepard in Wyoming in 1998 is a chilling reminder of the fragility of democratic rights for the oppressed. In the U.S., 13 states have so-called sodomy laws, with homosexuality punishable by up to life imprisonment in states like Idaho and Oklahoma. Upholding Georgia's "sodomy" law in 1986 the Supreme Court declared that "consenting adults have no constitutional rights to private homosexual sex." Now the court has agreed to hear *Lawrence v. Texas*, a case in which two men were convicted for private consensual sex. Chief Justice William Rehnquist made his bigoted views clear when he likened a university's refusal to recognize a gay student group to "measures necessary to prevent the spread of measles."

In Britain, the Victorian-era laws of "buggery" and "solicitation for immoral purpose," used to prosecute Oscar Wilde over a century ago, still await the Blair government's years-old promise of a "historic sweep." In 1998 the laws were used to prosecute and convict the "Bolton Seven" for having consensual sex. In the face of massive public outrage the government was forced to set them free, but in the last couple of years there have been massive roundups under the guise of "protecting" children from "pedophiles."

In capitalist society, the persecution of homosexuals is linked to the subjugation of women and is used to buttress the institution of the family. The family, the main source of women's oppression, serves as a vehicle through which private property is passed down from one generation to the next and to provide the means by which future generations of workers are raised. Through the institution of the family the ruling classes instill bourgeois codes of "morality," subservience and obedience to authority, and reinforce religious obscurantism, thus serving the ultimate goal of regimenting society. Those who deviate from these set restrictions ultimately become the subjects of persecution.

Immediately upon their accession to power, the Bolsheviks swept away all laws discriminating against homosexuals.



AFP

Cairo, March 18: Demonstrators' sign reads: "No to a Strike on Iraq, No to Zionist Massacres."

Describing the measures taken by the revolutionary government that took power after the Russian Revolution in 1917, Dr. Grigorii Batkis, the director of the Moscow Institute of Social Hygiene, wrote:

> "It [the new Soviet legislation] declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters, so long as no body is injured and no one's interests are encroached upon....
>
> "Concerning homosexuality, sodomy, and various other forms of sexual gratification, which are set down in European legislation as offenses against public morality, Soviet legislation treats these exactly the same as so-called 'natural' intercourse. All forms of sexual intercourse are private matters."
>
> —quoted in John Lauritsen and David Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement*, 1974

The International Communist League, in the tradition of Bolshevism, is irreconcilably opposed to each and every manifestation of sexual discrimination. We stand firmly for the absolute non-interference of the state into consensual sexual relations. We call for ***full democratic rights for homosexuals.*** We demand the immediate release of all the gay men jailed in Egypt and the abolition of all legislation that discriminates against homosexuals.

It was no coincidence that the court handed down its sentences on the eve of the American colonial assault on Iraq. In bed with the American imperialists and contributing to their war effort by facilitating the passage of warships through the Suez canal, Mubarak's regime sought to head off potential protests against the war by appeasing the Islamic fundamentalists. But unlike the protests against the war in Afghanistan which were overwhelmingly dominated by Islamic fundamentalists, the current antiwar protests in Egypt have had a large component of leftist youth and Arab nationalists who look back to the regime of Gamal Abdel Nasser in the 1950s and '60s.

For more than ten hours, tens of thousands of protesters filled Tahrir (Liberation) Square in central Cairo on March 20, the first day of the U.S. attack on Iraq, venting their anger against the regime and chanting songs by the poets Ahmed Negm and Sheik Imam. The duo was famous in the 1960s and 1970s for representing the militant fervor of students and workers during strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations. "It took 31 years and an American-led war on Iraq for the rare occurrence to be reenacted," wrote *Al-Ahram Weekly* (27 March-2 April), referring to the left-wing led student movement that shook the country in 1972. The protesters at Tahrir Square last month were met by the regime's terror machine of police dogs, armored police cars and fire engines. Thousands were arrested and beaten, among them Nasserist member of parliament Hamdeen Sabahi.

Marxists seek to win these leftist youth to a revolutionary program, including defense of the rights of homosexuals, women and religious minorities. Acting as the tribune of the people, a revolutionary Leninist party must lead the working class in defense of all the oppressed as an integral part of its struggle against the capitalist system. Only the overthrow of the capitalist order internationally through proletarian revolution can lay the material foundations for a new world in which the oppressive institution of the family will be replaced with collective childcare and housework. Only then can all human relations be truly based on the free choice of individuals. The International Communist League is committed to championing these liberating goals of communism and the necessarily global struggle for a classless society. ***Stop the persecution of homosexuals now!*** ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Affirmative Action Under Fire

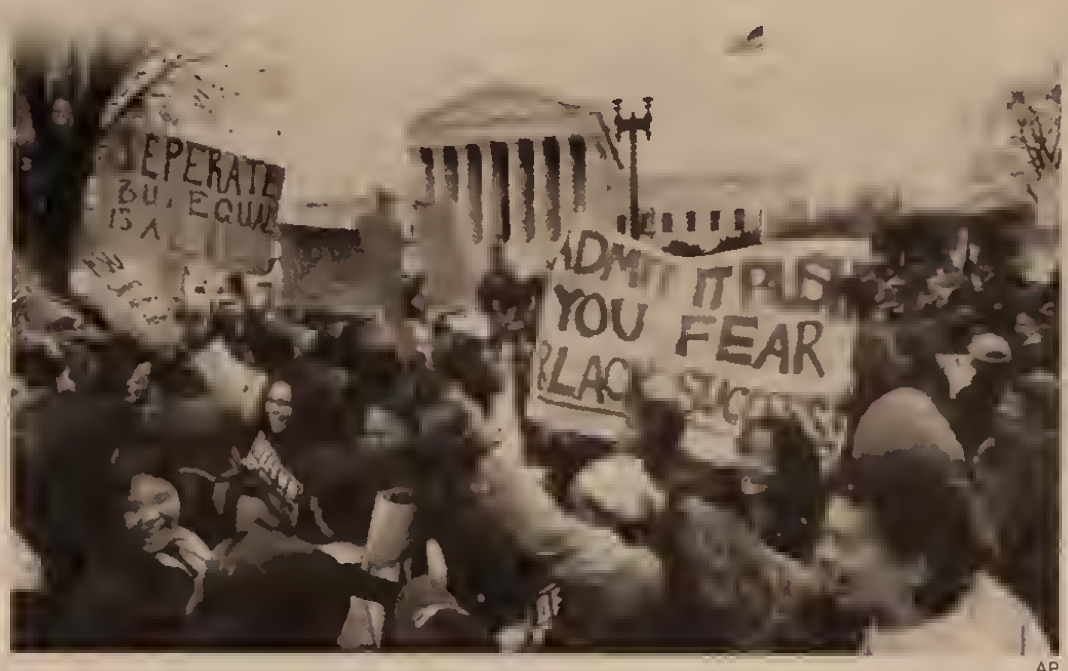
For Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All!

Chanting "Jim Crow—hell, no!" thousands demonstrated outside the Supreme Court on April 1 as Bush administration lawyers argued that a University of Michigan admissions policy that takes the race of minority applicants into account is unconstitutional. If the Court agrees, it will spell the death of what remains of affirmative action programs for blacks

Young Spartacus

and other minorities set up as a result of the mass struggles of the 1950s and '60s for school integration. Noting that Bush's vilification of affirmative action on Martin Luther King Jr. Day was followed by a modest increase in government funding for historically black colleges, a protester from one such institution, Hampton University, remarked, "It was his 'go back to Africa' statement."

The drive to eliminate affirmative action is part of a continuing racist purge of higher education, from the gutting of open admissions and remedial programs at the City University of New York to massive tuition hikes there and at other public universities to the latest effort by right-wing forces to do away with minority scholarship programs. The doors to the best universities are not just being slammed shut, but bolted against all but the thinnest layer of black and Latino students. And those who remain have been subjected to a nightmarish hell in recent years: racist graffiti on a main sidewalk at the University of Michigan; a black mannequin hanging by a noose from a tree at liberal Antioch College; a "ghetto party" at a white fraternity at Dartmouth; simulated lynchings of black students by white frat boys dressed in KKK robes at Auburn.



AP

Washington, D.C., April 1: Thousands rally outside Supreme Court to protest attack on University of Michigan affirmative action program.

Bush condemned affirmative action for giving preference to some applicants "not because of any academic achievement or life experience, but solely because they are African-American, Hispanic or Native American." So preference is supposed to be based on "academic achievement" and "life experience"? This from a former C-average student whose entire silver-spooned life, including his admission to Yale, was greased by having the surname Bush. Another "principled opponent of affirmative action" is the new Republican governor of Alaska, former Senator Frank Murkowski. When he was elected governor, it became his job to select his replacement as Senator. After deep thought and much research, he decided the best person for the job was...his daughter, Lisa Murkowski. "Your mother and I are very proud," he beamed in announcing the appointment.

Higher education, like every bourgeois institution in American society, is shot through with race and class bias. As a *Wall Street Journal* (20 February) headline acknowledged, "At Many Colleges, the Rich Kids Get Affirmative Action." Duke University, for example, allocates as many as 160 places for "applicants with rich or powerful parents who are not alumni," above and beyond the sons and daughters of rich or powerful alumni. As late as 1966, at the height of the civil rights movement, only 400 of the University of Michigan's 32,000 students were black, this in a state where black school enrollment in Detroit alone was over 150,000. Even under the current Michigan plan, a white applicant from a rural high school with an honors program can get almost as many preference points, 16 compared to 20, as a black youth.

As part of our fight for full equality for black people and other minorities, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs oppose the reactionary assault against affirmative action. However, unlike

continued on page 6

Protest Anti-Gay Persecution in Egypt!

Schiller/NY Times

Victims of anti-gay dragnet transported to state security court in Cairo, July 2001.

On March 15, a Cairo appeals court sentenced 21 men charged with "habitual debauchery," "obscene behavior" and "contempt of religion" to three years imprisonment and forced labor. The men were part of the so-called "Queen Boat defendants," a group of 52 arrested in May 2001 in a police raid on a Cairo night club of the same name, and charged with the "crime of homosexual activity." During their pre-trial detention they had been beaten and tortured until they confessed to being gay. The men were further humiliated by being subjected to forced medical examinations in order to determine whether they had engaged in anal intercourse. Their names, photographs, addresses and workplaces were front-page news in the state-owned newspapers. They were accused of being agents of Israel and of being funded by foreign agencies to spread the "Western disease" of homosexuality. As a result, in addition to the victimization and suffering of the men themselves, many of their relatives lost their jobs.

In November 2001, the 52 men were tried by a State Security Court, a legal arm established under the emergency laws by which President Hosni Mubarak has kept the country under the boot since 1981. Twenty-two of them were sentenced to prison terms ranging from one to two years. One man was sentenced to five years imprisonment and 29 were acquitted. Not satisfied with the sentences, Mubarak ordered a retrial of all the men, "innocent" and "guilty" alike, before an appeals court which duly obliged by handing down harsher sentences.

Since the raid on the Queen Boat two years ago, the regime has escalated its campaign of repression against homosexuals. Hundreds of gay men have been arrested in raids on their homes and through Internet entrapments, put on trial before star-chamber courts and sentenced to prison terms of up to three years. According to the *New York Times* the police have made an average of one arrest a week since the beginning of 2003. Neither the self-proclaimed leftists in the country nor bourgeois liberals have protested the witchhunt. ***The working class in Egypt and around the world must protest these heinous acts of persecution!***

Egypt is not alone when it comes to the persecution of homosexuals. Across the Islamic crescent, from Morocco to Malaysia, homosexuality is a crime under Sharia (Islamic law), punishable by death

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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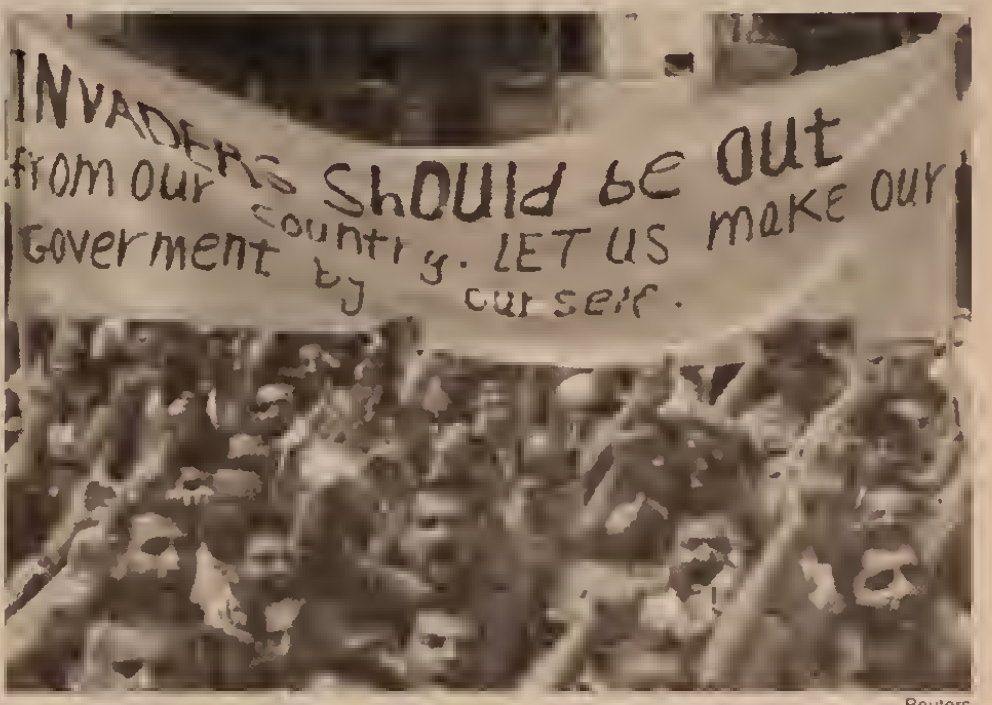
No. 802

25 April 2003

U.S. Hands Off Syria!

Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq!

AP



Reuters

As U.S. occupation army terrorizes colonial victims in Baghdad, thousands rally outside Abu Hanifa Mosque demanding U.S. get out.

APRIL 22—The people of the northern Iraqi city of Mosul got their first real taste of American "liberation" last Tuesday when U.S. Marines fired directly into a crowd of demonstrators protesting against the occupation. Within minutes, ten Iraqis had been shot dead and dozens more wounded; the next day at least seven more people in Mosul were killed by American troops. In a column in the London *Guardian* (10 April), Seumas Milne wrote:

> "What cannot now be disguised, as US marines swagger around the Iraqi capital swathing toppled statues of Saddam Hussein with the stars and stripes and declaring 'we own Baghdad,' is the crudely colonial nature of this enterprise. Any day now, the pro-Israeli retired US general Jay Garner is due to take over the running of Iraq, with plans to replace the Iraqi dinar with the dollar, parcel out contracts to US companies and set the free market parameters for the future 'interim Iraqi administration'."

The imperialists may have won an easy military victory, but the colonial occupation has already provoked outrage and resistance among the population. In the southern Shi'ite city of Nasiriya, up to 20,000 marched to protest the colonial occupation. On April 18, tens of thousands more demonstrated on the streets of Baghdad, carrying banners in Arabic and English reading: "Leave Our Country. We Want Peace" and "We Reject American Hegemony." Organized by the Shi'ite mosques, this demonstration was a rare display of unity between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims. But it took place under the green banners of Islamic reaction.

The imperialist occupation has encouraged reactionary forces to emerge, from fundamentalists demanding an Islamic republic to monarchists to "democrats" on the CIA payroll. Ethnic and religious antagonisms, stoked by the British imperialist conquest at the end of World War I and fueled by decades of bourgeois-nationalist rule, now threaten to erupt in an orgy of bloodletting. In the areas of northern Iraq dominated by the U.S.-allied nationalists of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), mobs have driven thousands of Arabs from their villages. In Mosul, Arab protesters not only chanted "U.S. out!" but also "Kurds out!" And the Turkmen minority is so besieged that they have appealed for military intervention by Turkey.

Mosul was a stronghold of the Ba'ath Party. However, among its population of some one million, one-third are Kurds, who also form a majority in the surrounding region. Under the Ba'ath regime's "Arabization" scheme, hundreds of thousands of Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians were driven out of the region. With 300,000 Kurdish refugees planning to return, the threat of communalist bloodshed hangs over the whole area. A reporter for the *Guardian* (17 April) noted that "Mosul looked more like a Beirut war zone than a liberated city."

No one really knows the number of civilians killed during the war, or even the number of Iraqi soldiers slaughtered while defending their country. What is clear is that the hospitals and morgues are overflowing with the dead and wounded. And what little civil infrastructure survived the U.S./British bombing and 12 years of starvation sanctions has been devastated through widespread looting carried out under the gaze of U.S. occupation forces who rushed to secure the country's oil fields. In Baghdad, 35 hospitals are closed because of looting and arson and the three still functioning are without basic drugs. Baghdad and other cities have been without electricity or water for weeks. And there is widespread fear of diseases such as cholera spreading as people drink contaminated water from the rivers.

Reuters

Invading U.S. troops immediately moved to secure Iraqi oil facilities.

What we are witnessing is the return to old-style colonial pillage, with the hated cops of the Ba'athist regime once again terrorizing the population as puppets of the colonial invaders. While U.S. troops guarded the Ministry of Oil, the imperialist occupiers gave a green light to the sacking of the Baghdad museum and the torching of the library—the cultural heritage of Iraq and indeed of humanity. In an eyewitness account, Robert Fisk wrote in the London *Independent* (13 April):

> "Our feet crunched on the wreckage of 5,000-year-old marble plinths and stone statuary and pots that had endured every siege of Baghdad, every invasion of Iraq throughout history—only to be destroyed when America came to 'liberate' the city....
>
> "Not since the Taliban embarked on their orgy of destruction against the Buddhas of Bamiyan and the statues in the museum of Kabul—perhaps not since the Second World War or earlier—have so

continued on page 6

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Shipping Bosses, Police Collude in Cop Rampage

Oakland Docks

OAKLAND—Unions around the world have sent statements protesting the April 7 cop rampage at the Port of Oakland. Cops opened fire on antiwar protesters, longshoremen and port truckers, injuring dozens—including nine members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU)—and arresting 31. *Drop all the charges now!*

This brutal assault brought home with a vengeance the direct link between the war against Iraq and the war on U.S. labor. As the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in a statement issued the same day: "Labor's enormous social power must be brought to bear *now* to stop the government's attack on the very right to protest the bloody colonial war and occupation of Iraq."

The deliberate targeting of this protest had the character of a "pre-emptive strike" against any potential union action. The Port of Oakland, the fourth largest in the nation, is critical to shipping war supplies to the imperialist military. A motion declaring solidarity with the antiwar protesters and longshoremen passed by AFSCME Local 444, representing municipal water workers in the Oakland area, declared that with its assault, "the government took aim and fired at the stronghold of labor power on the West Coast. Given the ILWU's ability to shut down the ports, it could very well have been an ILWU picket line the cops were attacking. This escalation of police violence was a warning directed at the whole labor movement in the Bay Area, as well as an attack on the very right to protest the U.S. war on Iraq."

Indeed, it is now known that the cop attack was coordinated and planned days in advance in collusion with the union-busting shipping bosses who locked out longshoremen last fall, in particular APL and Stevedoring Services of America (SSA). The day after the attack, the *Oakland Tribune* reported, "At a meeting last week, officials from the Police Department, port and two shipping lines targeted by protesters came up with a strategy to handle the expected gatherings."

Hafalia/SF Chronicle

Cop attack against antiwar protest at Port of Oakland, April 7.

Jack Heyman, the ILWU business agent on duty when the protest began, was dragged out of his car, thrown to the ground, arrested and jailed for 18 hours for trying to protect his union members. Heyman said that when taken to the cops' temporary command center in a port rail yard, he saw "the top dog from SSA's Matson operations, Kevin Mehlberg, and another SSA bigshot in their conspicuous yellow and green company jackets" (*Maritime Worker Monitor*, 18 April).

Statements by Oakland Police Department (OPD) spokesmen claimed that police were responding to demonstrators throwing rocks and other heavy objects. Demonstrators and longshoremen present—including supporters of the Spartacist League, two of whom were injured by the "less lethal" projectiles shot from police shotguns—uniformly report that the police attack was both unprovoked and deliberate, firing at close range.

Statements of protest have been sent by unions from Pakistan to Canada, including dockers in the Compagnia Unica in Genoa, Italy; the European zone of the International Dockworkers Council; the Brazilian labor federation CUT; and the National Council of Dockworkers' Unions of Japan and the All Japan Dockworkers' Union, which in 2001 refused to load Japanese military supplies bound for Afghanistan to assist the U.S.-led war there. The Oakland Education Association, which had some 15 members at the port protest, and the main Bay Area labor councils also protested the attack.

A letter to Oakland mayor Jerry Brown by ILWU International president James Spinosa stated, "Our union was founded on the blood of workers shot and killed by police in 1934. We did not tolerate such actions then and we certainly will not tolerate them now." A union worth its salt would have shut down the entire port in an elementary act of self-defense once the first concussion grenade was lobbed by the cops on April 7. This did not happen. Why? Because of the pro-capitalist outlook of the ILWU leadership, which leads them to sanctify the myriad laws and institutions that the bourgeois state has put in place to keep the workers in line.

The heavily black ILWU Local 10 has a progressive image: it has endorsed any number of antiwar demonstrations—including Congresswoman Barbara Lee's April 5 rally in Oakland, at which she called for support to the troops while pushing for votes to the Democrats in the next elections. What the support to the "friends of labor" Democrats gets you was seen by the response of liberal mayor Jerry Brown to the cop attack.

As the *San Francisco Chronicle* (8 April) put it, Brown declared that the "police acted appropriately in dealing with protesters who wanted to 'occupy and take over the port and shut it down'." But only last August, the same Jerry Brown was lauded by the same ILWU tops, who invited him to bluster forth from the platform of an ILWU rally about how he was a friend of the working class. At a rally at the Federal Building in Oakland on August 12, he even boasted he was "there with you" at a protest picket at the Oakland docks in 1997 against the *Neptune Jade* in support of striking dockers in Liverpool, England. Yet the OPD's eagerness to try out their "crowd control" firepower on the docks in support of the rape of Iraq recalls the sinister 1999 invasion of Oakland staged by the U.S. Marines under its Operation Urban Warrior, an exercise also welcomed by Mayor Brown (see "Marines Invade Oakland," *WV* No. 710, 2 April 1999). He knows whose side he is on: the capitalist rulers.

In fact, the ILWU leadership has itself embraced the "war on terror," even insisting it would load military cargo during the lockout of its members last fall. Faced with the anti-union Maritime Security Act, the union bureaucrats offered up the union's services to enforce "security" on the docks. April 7 was exactly what "security" on the docks means!

The ILWU response is to pressure the City of Oakland for an "independent investigation," which will supposedly lead to more control over the cops. This call has been taken up by "progressive" Democrats on the Oakland City Council—like Jane Brunner and Vice Mayor Nancy Nadel—and a public hearing has been scheduled for April 29. The aim of these Democratic Party "soft cops" is to head off struggle against the system of exploitation by offering the illusion that it can be pressured to satisfy the needs of the exploited.

The facts of this attack are obvious. The only thing an "investigation" will do is to whitewash the role of the police. The Oakland Riders, a cabal of notoriously racist OPD thugs who rampaged through the West Oakland ghetto—three of whom are currently on trial in Oakland—are the true face of the capitalist police. The only thing that can restrain them is the power of workers organized in unions to shut down the flow of profits—i.e., hurting the cops' real masters, the capitalists.

The truth is that keeping the working class and oppressed down and protecting capitalist profits is the *whole reason for existence* of the police. You won't hear this from the International Socialist Organization (ISO), which supports the cops when they "rebel collectively," or the Taaffeites of Socialist Alternative, who think cops are "workers in uniform." In their view, what happened on April 7 was that one group of workers shot at another group of workers.

Workers need a party that fights for their interests and those of all the oppressed. Such a workers party would, for example, take a side in defense of Iraq against the U.S. invasion and occupation and would defend immigrants witch-hunted by the "war on terror" at home. That party will be built in a political struggle against the current union misleaders who push the lie that there can be a partnership between labor and capital. As written on one of the signs carried by members of the SL and Spartacus Youth Club who were protesting at the port on April 7, "Break with the Democrats! Build a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!" ■

On the British Invasion of Baghdad

TROTSKY

LENIN

When the British imperialists invaded Baghdad in 1917, they, too, claimed to come as liberators, not occupiers. As Britain proceeded to impose a bloody occupation over a state artificially cobbled together from the distinct Kurdish, Sunni and Shi'ite populations, it used poison gas on rebellious villagers and unleashed a massive wave of terror bombings throughout the country. In a 1922 letter, "representatives of the Mesopotamian people" appealed to the Communist International for solidarity. In a reply on behalf of the Comintern, Gregory Zinoviev warned against any illusions in the League of Nations, predecessor of the United Nations.

I have read your letter with the greatest interest for your cause. The tragic history of the subjugation of Mesopotamia is the clearest possible expression of the hypocritical and treacherous policy pursued by the English government. And where has English imperialism ever acted otherwise? In India, Egypt, South Africa—everywhere we find the same policy of lies, treachery, and ruthless cruelty....

In your letter you refer to the fact that the regime introduced by English imperialism into your native country is a violation of the principles of the League of Nations. Here there seems to be a grave misunderstanding. The League of Nations was called into existence after the war, by the imperialist victors: England, France, etc., in order that the vanquished might be the better robbed. It is precisely England who now heads this institution.

Thus the "principles" of the League of Nations differ in no way from those "high principles" now being put into practice in Mesopotamia by England, and realized by a bombardment of the defenceless population from aeroplanes. I beg in all friendship to draw your attention to this misunderstanding, and request that you enlighten all those who share your views on the matter, in order to avoid the serious errors rendered inevitable by an incorrect estimate of the true character of the so-called "League of Nations."

The emancipation of Mesopotamia will never be attained with the aid or support of this or that imperialist state or League of Nations, but by the organized struggle of the broad masses of the town and country population of Irak against the occupation. These masses are to be convinced that their material position will be alleviated and improved when the English are driven out: all traitorous Mesopotamians, with Emir Feisal at their head, who are seeking for personal enrichment from the oppression of the people, are to be exposed to the contempt they deserve, the confidence of the neighbouring countries is to be won and when all this is realized, then the victorious end of your heroic struggle against English imperialism is secured.

The Communist International, which unites the millions of revolutionary workers and peasants of England, France, Germany, Russia, etc., assures you of its sympathy and support in your fight for liberty.

—"The Leaders of the Mesopotamian People to the Comintern,"
International Press Correspondence (3 May 1923)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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No. 802 **25 April 2003**

Anarchism and Imperialist War

The following are excerpts from an 8 March article in Spartacist Canada *No. 136 (Spring 2003) titled "Down With U.S. and Canadian Imperialism! Defend Iraq!", published by our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste. The International Socialists (I.S.) are the Canadian co-thinkers of the British Socialist Workers Party.*

SPARTACIST CANADA

To struggle against capitalist war and degradation, the workers need a revolutionary party, not a bunch of fake leftists who tie them to the class enemy. As V.I. Lenin, leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, wrote during World War I in *Socialism and War*:

> "Today *unity* with the opportunists *actually* means subordinating the working class to their 'own' national bourgeoisie, and an alliance with the latter for the purpose of oppressing other nations and of fighting for dominant-nation privileges; it means *splitting* the revolutionary proletariat of all countries."

Lenin emphasized that a decisive split from the opportunists was the *precondition* for the proletariat to further its own class interests and fight for its own class rule.

Today's "socialist" organizers of the antiwar coalitions, notably the I.S., pursue exactly the kind of "unity" that Lenin so sharply condemned. They puff up the NDP's [social-democratic New Democratic Party] "antiwar" credentials and hide its crimes, building platforms for NDP honchos like Layton, McDonough and Svend Robinson. Far from looking to proletarian struggle against the various national capitalist rulers, the I.S. looks to the rulers of Canada and West Europe to stand up to the U.S....

Standing to the left of NDP-loyal outfits like the I.S. are a series of anarchist and other "direct action" organizations. A recent leaflet by Anti-Authoritarian Anti-War Toronto headlined "Class Struggle Against the Work/War Machine!" sharply attacks the local CSW/TCASWI antiwar coalitions, in which the I.S. plays a leading role:

> "Far from opposing the political, social and economic structures that create war (i.e. capitalism), TCASWI advocates the reactionary/pacifist position that capitalist society can exist without war in other words with capitalist peace....
>
> "CSW/TCASWI's role has been to pacify and paralyze autonomous working class opposition by channeling it into activity that legitimizes the existence of capital, the state and therefore war."

All true. Yet this same leaflet denounces the TL's call to militarily defend Iraq against imperialism while giving no political support whatever to the vicious Saddam Hussein regime. "What is the difference between 'military defense' and 'political support'?" it asks, continuing:

> "Well of course there is none.... [I]f war is politics by other means, then 'military defense' is nothing more than 'political support' by other means. The 'leftist' defensist theory is nothing more than a thinly veiled call to support a worker-murdering capitalist war machine."

The distinction between military defense and political support—whether of workers' organizations in the capitalists' gunsights, or of whole peoples and countries being trampled by imperialism—is crucial for advancing the interests of the proletariat and oppressed. Thus we stand with the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty [OCAP] against the state's vicious attacks, despite our political disagreements. We defend workers' unions and strike pickets against scab, boss and state attack while struggling politically against the pro-capitalist labor misleaders. The reason is simple: a defeat for OCAP or a busted union is an attack on all who would defy the capitalist rulers, while their victories will advance the class struggle.

Spartacist Canada

Trotskyist League contingent at February 15 Vancouver antiwar protest.

Similarly, the crushing of neocolonial Iraq at the hands of the U.S. and its allies would strengthen the imperialists and embolden them to further rampage and bloody conquest. Thus it would be a devastating blow to the struggles of the working people of Iraq and throughout the neocolonial world against both the ravages of imperialism, and the domestic capitalist rulers, who are tied to and subordinated to the imperialists.

The anarchists' equation between military defense of a weak neocolonial country and political support to its rulers mirrors the imperialists' lie that opposition to their war means support to Saddam Hussein. We stand with the Iraqi people against their bloody rulers who, with Washington's complicity, slaughtered Iraqi Communists and waged a hideously brutal war against the oppressed Kurdish people. Indeed, until he invaded Kuwait in 1990, the imperialists were silent on Hussein's many crimes. A revolutionary party in Iraq would agitate for a revolutionary war to defend the country from imperialism. It would seek to give leadership to the resistance of the Iraqi people against the entire Iraqi ruling class, both the ruling Ba'athists and the exile gang the CIA is nurturing.

The anarchist leaflet concludes with the slogan, "No War Between Nations! No Peace Between Classes!" raised as well by the North Eastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC) in Montreal and Quebec City. This may sound radical, but it is an excuse for neutralism and a confession of impotence in the face of imperialist onslaught. Its logic is ultimately chauvinist. All nations are not equal. Some wear the imperialist boot; others, subjugated by imperialism, are trampled by it. Would these anarchists have been neutral in conflicts between the British Empire and its Indian colony? Between the bloody French imperialists and Algeria?

And what of the Palestinian struggle against Zionist state terror, on which their statement is conspicuously silent? Some elements in NEFAC, saying "anarchism spits on all nationalism," denounce the call to defend the Palestinians and oppose the elementary struggle for their self-determination (see Ryan McCarthy, "Anarchists and Palestine: Class Struggle or Popular Front?" A-Infos News Service). This statement cites the very real betrayals of the nationalist leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to justify refusal to take a stand with the oppressed Palestinians against their oppressors. So those who may have

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DEBATE

Spartacist League vs. League for the Revolutionary Party

"The Fight Against Imperialist War: Which Way Forward?"

NEW YORK CITY

322 West 48th Street, 1st floor
(between 8th and 9th Avenues)
Take C or E train to 50th St. stop

For more information: (212) 267-1025 or e-mail nysl@compuserve.com

Saturday, May 10, 3 p.m.

On Saturday, May 10 in New York City, Don Alexander of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), will debate a spokesman for the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP). The topic of the debate, "The Fight Against Imperialist War: Which Way Forward?" poses the fundamental questions facing workers and youth looking for a proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist perspective in struggle against the carnage unleashed by the imperialist rulers of the United States. For in the imperialist epoch, as Lenin pointed out long ago, the struggle against war is inextricably linked to the struggle for workers revolution, since you cannot effectively fight against war without fighting to end the capitalist system that breeds it.

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union has made it possible for the dangerous and rapacious U.S. ruling class to militarily ride virtually unchecked to satisfy its global ambitions. This underscores that the question of where one stood when defense of the Soviet Union was posed is hardly an academic or historical question, but one that reveals in practice whether one stands on the side of the proletariat against the imperialist order.

Since the mid 1960s when the Spartacist tendency was formed, we have upheld revolutionary Trotskyism on the key programmatic issues, not least being the need to defend the gains of the planned economies issuing from anti-capitalist overturns. From the Soviet Union and East Europe to the remaining deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam, we have fought for the unconditional military defense of the degenerated and deformed workers states against imperialism and for proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies. This is the programmatic heritage of Trotsky's struggle against Stalinism and for new October Revolutions internationally. The need for proletarian defense of the remaining deformed workers states has been underlined as capitalist counterrevolution wreaks unprecedented havoc on the living standards of the peoples of the former Soviet Union and East Europe.

On the other hand, from its inception in the mid 1970s, the LRP has been defined not by a proletarian—i.e., Trotskyist—program but by the prevailing winds of petty-bourgeois radicalism. The LRP is a direct political heir of Max Shachtman, who led a split from the American Trotskyist movement in 1940. Succumbing to anti-Communist hysteria over the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact, Shachtman repudiated the Trotskyist call for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union. The LRP has throughout its existence followed in Shachtman's footsteps, joining the imperialists in denouncing the Soviet intervention against CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan in the 1980s and backing Boris Yeltsin in his counterrevolutionary power grab in 1991, which led to the final undoing of the October Revolution.

Directly connected to the question of how to struggle against imperialist war is the necessity of forging a Leninist vanguard party that takes up key questions such as the fight for black liberation in the U.S. and the fight to end the Zionist subjugation of the Palestinian people—both important areas of difference between the LRP and SL. The radical public is invited to participate in this important counterposition of program, which will include time for speakers from the floor. We contend that those who cannot defend the gains of past workers' victories are incapable of conquering new ones. Come see for yourself in this debate between the revolutionary Trotskyist politics of the ICL and the centrist Shachtmanite politics of the LRP.

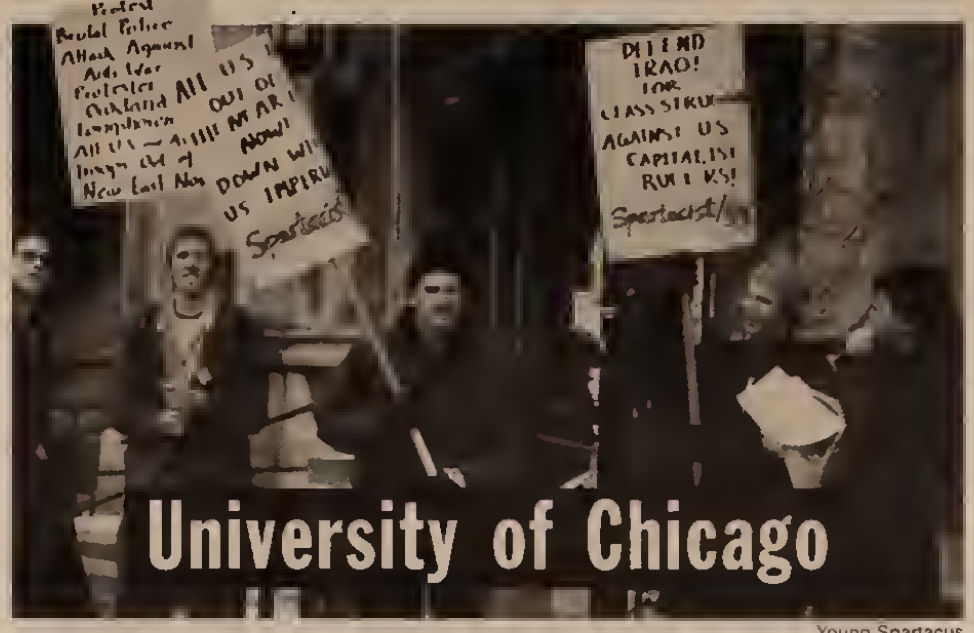
Young Spartacus

SYC Leads Protest Against Cop Attacks on Antiwar Demonstrators

Riot-equipped police launched a brutal and premeditated assault on antiwar protesters and longshoremen at the Oakland docks on April 7, opening fire with wooden bullets, pellet-filled "sting bags" and concussion grenades. Over a dozen demonstrators and dock workers were hospitalized, and dozens more were arrested. The Spartacus Youth Clubs moved quickly to mobilize students to protest this potentially lethal attack. The Chicago SYC initiated a rally at the University of Chicago the very next day under the slogans: "Protest brutal police attack against antiwar protesters. Oakland longshoremen! All U.S. and allied troops out of the Near East now!"

Our protest was a united front joined by the U. of C. NoWar in Iraq coalition and the reformist Spark group in condemning the police attack. As one U. of C. NoWar member said, "This is not only a war on Iraq, this is a war on our civil liberties and freedoms and our rights and freedoms here at home." Protesters gave speeches and took up chants like "W. Bush, imperialist beast, U.S. out of the Middle East!"

The opportunists in the International Socialist Organization (ISO), who run the NoWar coalition at the University of Illinois at Chicago, refused to hold



Young Spartacus

April 8: Emergency speakout initiated by Chicago SYC against Oakland cop attack on antiwar protesters.

a similar demonstration with us communists at UIC in defense of the right to protest the war. The ISO preferred to attend an administration-sponsored "Open Forum"—billed as an event for pro- and antiwar students to "express their feelings, thoughts, concerns, and opinions regarding the war with Iraq" so that the university could be "sustained" as a "true academic community." Yuck!

The speakers at our U. of C. protest carried on a debate over *how* to stop wars of imperialist aggression. This debate centered on the SYC's revolutionary proletarian internationalist opposition to war versus the strategy of building the "broadest possible unity" against war, shared alike by Spark, the ISO and the NoWar coalitions. As one speaker from U. of C. NoWar put it: "These other people, they're against imperialism. But NoWar in Iraq is just against war in Iraq." Simple opposition to war is *not enough*. War is endemic to the capitalist system, so the struggle against war necessarily requires a struggle against the capitalist order. The SYC spokesman at the protest explained:

> "The U. of C. NoWar coalition attempts to build the broadest possible unity against the war. That sounds fine, right? Nothing wrong with unity. But unity with whom? And for what purpose? The organizers of the antiwar protests have sought merely to use slogans such as 'No war' and 'Peace is patriotic' in order to make it safe for the movement to be taken up by Democratic Party politicians. But elements of the Democratic Party only oppose this war to refurbish the image of U.S. imperialism so it can lead the U.S. into more slaughters like when they dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and killed millions in Vietnam. The strategy of unity with your 'own' ruling class can only divide the working class internationally and demobilize the real fight that needs to be waged—the struggle against the profit system of which racism and war are its inevitable outcome."

U. of C. NoWar's coalition is broad, indeed. One article they reproduced and distributed was written by none other than reactionary demagogue Pat Buchanan, including among its right-wing ramblings the complaint that the U.S. fought Hitler instead of the Soviet Union in World War II!

In turn, a U. of C. NoWar member said, "We here at NoWar in Iraq U. of C. say that having built this broad coalition, we did slow down Bush's war drive, and we have done a lot to fight against the war and that we continue to do so working together. And for that reason we took up the Spartacist call for a united-front demonstration today." This conflates united-front protest with an ongoing political bloc in the name of broad unity. The purpose of the united front is to mobilize in a common action against an attack or threat, while each organization puts forward its own political program. By design, the "broad" antiwar coalitions limit in advance what is fought for to what is acceptable to pro-imperialist liberals and bourgeois politicians, forces representing the class in whose interest imperialist war is waged. The proponents of "broad" coalitions claim they slowed the U.S. war drive because mass liberal antiwar protest supposedly emboldened the "opposition" of the French and German governments. But that "opposition" was dictated only by those capitalist governments' own rival imperialist interests. Chirac and Schröder wanted a war waged under UN auspices, which they hoped would bring them a share of the spoils.

As for Spark, our speaker noted: "Spark, a group that claims to be socialist, acts as one with the liberal class-collaborationists in saying, 'Support our troops, bring them home.' Those people over there in Iraq, who are killing innocent civilians for the pride and pleasure of the bourgeoisie, aren't our troops any more than it is our government. We welcome every military setback for U.S. imperialism in its colonial war against

Spartacist Educationals

CHICAGO Sunday, April 27

1 p.m.

U.S. Imperialism on Bloody Rampage in the Post-Soviet World

Speaker: Joseph Seymour
Spartacist League Central Committee

4 p.m.

Bolshevism vs. Social Democracy, Anarchism

The Russian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

University of Illinois – Chicago (UIC)
Circle Center (CCC), Room 713
750 S. Halsted
For information: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@ineme.com

NEW YORK CITY Saturday-Sunday, April 26-27

Saturday, April 26, 5 p.m.

The Kurdish Question and the U.S. Invasion of Iraq

Speaker: Bruce André, Spartacist League

Sunday, April 27, 1 p.m.

Twelve Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

Speaker: Victor Gibbons, Spartacist League

322 West 48th Street, first floor
(E or C train to 50th Street, between 8th and 9th)
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TORONTO Sunday, April 27, Noon-5 P.M.

First Session

Russia 1917: From War to Revolution

Second Session

"New World Order": Imperialist Barbarism

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Room 5185
252 Bloor Street West (above St. George Station)
For information: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcen@on.albn.com

BAY AREA Saturday-Sunday, May 3-4

Saturday, May 3, 2 p.m.

U.S. Imperialism on Bloody Rampage in the Post-Soviet World

Speaker: Joseph Seymour
Spartacist League Central Committee

Saturday, May 3, 5 p.m.

The Kurdish Question and the U.S. Invasion of Iraq

Speaker: Bruce André, Spartacist League

Sunday, May 4, 12 Noon

The Fight for a Revolutionary Workers Party

France 1968: Lessons of the Student Revolt and Workers General Strike

Speakers: Valerie West and Steve Henderson

University of California at Berkeley
Valley Life Sciences Building, Room 2040
For information: Los Angeles: (213) 380-8239,
Bay Area: (510) 839-0851, Vancouver: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

Cal Students Say: ROTC Off Campus!

Young Spartacus

SYC-led united-front protest against ROTC military recruiters on UC Berkeley campus, April 12.

As the U.S. imperialist troops tightened their stranglehold on Iraq, some 70 people came out to a united-front protest initiated by the Spartacus Youth Club against Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets and recruiters at UC Berkeley on April 12. Thousands were on hand for "Cal Day 2003," UC Berkeley's annual open house for prospective students, where ROTC every year tries to seduce these youth into becoming officers for the next imperialist slaughter with scholarships and job training. As rain came pouring down, the protesters set up a picket line and demanded: *ROTC off campus! All U.S. troops out of the Near East now!*

A group of Berkeley students called the Twisted Sister cluster, who are involved with Direct Action to Stop the War, commendably came out in full force for the united front. The youth in Twisted Sister, some donning anarchy symbols, chanted "R-O-T-C off campus now!" We carried signs with slogans including calls for "Open Admissions!" and "Free, Quality Education for All!" A popular chant was "Saddam, Bin Laden and Pinochet—all created by the CIA!" Many passers-by applauded our efforts, and some joined the protest.

At the protest, one SYCer spoke on the war against Iraq. "This war isn't about 'liberation' of the Iraqi people, it is about the colonization of a strategically located oil-rich nation. The U.S. also wants to send a message to their imperialist rivals." A member of the Labor Black League for Social Defense, which is fraternally allied with the Spartacist League and endorsed the demonstration, said in a speech: "The best way to defend the victims of imperialist war abroad as well as blacks, immigrants and working people from the war on them at home is through class struggle against America's capitalist rulers. We in the Labor Black League stand for a fighting labor movement!"

The protest was an opportunity for students to stand against the horrors of the blitzkrieg in Iraq by striking a blow against the U.S. imperialist military appendage on campus. The SYC built for this action all across the Bay Area, including a trip to Santa Cruz to participate in a protest against military recruiters called by the Resource Center for Non-Violence. Although not at the protest, endorsers of the rally included the Freedom Socialist Party. Standing United for Peace, the Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Resource Center from Santa Cruz and Ann Robertson, a lecturer at San Francisco State.

Many of the fake socialists who claim to be building the antiwar movement were nowhere to be found, although we asked for their support. Antiwar coalitions built by these groups, like International ANSWER and Not In Our Name (NION), also failed to give even a paper endorsement.

Anyone who opposes the war against Iraq should want to struggle against militarism on campus by obstructing the recruitment of officers for the U.S. armed forces. Yet at its March 22 meeting, the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition rejected our call for such a protest, with many members seeing ROTC's presence on campus as harmless or even a good thing because they provide scholarships and a liberal education for cadets! Individual International Socialist Organization (ISO) members voted in favor of the anti-ROTC protest at the coalition meeting, but when SYC members went to an ISO meeting to motivate united-front action, all they said was, "We're not interested."

The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), accusing us of "sectarianism," refused to attend or endorse the demonstration because it was initiated by us. The RCP, through its NION coalition, endorsed a demonstration on April 5 led by Democratic Party liberals but refused to appear at a united front against ROTC! For its part, ANSWER, which was set up by the Workers World Party, held a rally two hours after the ROTC action, echoing the patriotic call to "Support our troops" with their slogan, "Bring the troops home now."

The self-styled "communists" of the Progressive Labor Party (PL) report in *Challenge* (30 April) that at the ANSWER rally they "distributed widely" a leaflet calling for "closing ROTC" and "ending Defense Department research on campuses." That's nice...but we approached PL about participating in the anti-ROTC protest, and they emphatically refused! What kind of "communists" would rather wax eloquent about skipping socialism and jumping straight to communism than struggle against the direct agencies of the bosses' war machine? The same people who refuse to defend oppressed neocolonial countries (Afghanistan, Iraq) against bloody military assault by *their own* ruling class!

In the last few months, it has become increasingly evident that these groups' moans for the "broadest possible unity" are in actuality an appeal to unite with a section of the ruling class that isn't satisfied with the way the war is being conducted. These peace marches always end with black Democrats like Barbara Lee or Jesse Jackson telling people about "Bush's war" and spreading the illusion that somehow the capitalist production system can be rewired to better serve our interests. Capitalism is not open to reform, and the groups that say otherwise help strengthen the control of the capitalists. Only socialist revolution can end imperialist war!

These limp appeals to the government have been met by some disillusioned youth with a turn toward "direct action" and anarchoid breakaway marches. Thoroughly dismayed by this subjectively leftward shift, the ISO wrote a polemic against direct action (*Socialist Worker*, 2 April), in which the ISO insists that "we need to keep organizing the widest possible expressions of antiwar opposition—and make sure that the movement speaks not only for the already committed, but for everyone who wants to say no to Bush's war." The ISO snarls at youth partaking in direct action for "isolating themselves from a wider audience." As thousands of protesters are being arrested in San Francisco under a Democratic administration and youth and workers are being shot at by the police at the Port of Oakland, these "socialists" shout out "unity!" ever louder in an attempt to draw outraged youth back into the arms of the Democrats!

Since the very first arrests, we have fought for workers and unions to come to the defense of those involved in direct action protests. We participate in some of them: four SYCers were arrested at a March 15 breakaway march and two of our comrades were wounded at the port on April 7. But in the absence of a program for workers revolution, these attempts to "stop business as usual until the war stops" remain within the framework of pressuring the capitalists. Militant antiwar youth must be won to recognizing that as a *strategy*, civil disobedience and direct actions are a dead end born out of their frustration that protest by millions of people around the world did nothing to stop the war.

At the April 12 action against ROTC, our "What do we want—Class war!" chant was met by many youth in Twisted Sister with counter-chants substituting the words "peace" and "justice" for "class war." Some said they are in favor of "class war," but they don't have an orientation toward the social class necessary for this "class war" to be successful. In order to "shut down the warmakers" you have to mobilize the social power of the working class to shut down the means of production (i.e., factories—not roads or office complexes) and reorganize society through a socialist revolution.

There is plenty of discontent at the base of American society, but the pro-capitalist labor misleaders sell out the unions and deceive the membership with the lie that workers and their exploiters have common interests. What these workers need is a revolutionary leadership! As opposed to the organizers of the antiwar demonstrations who seek to corral a new generation of youth into the arms of the Democratic Party, we bring our Marxist perspective to anti-capitalist youth who are looking for answers. The young communists in the SYCs know what it means to be real fighters against capitalism, racism and war. It means to fight for the perspective of building a revolutionary vanguard party capable of leading the working class, radical youth and all the oppressed in the fight for a socialist world! Join us! ■

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the people of Iraq." Spark's speaker made no attempt to respond to our speaker's criticism.

One U. of C. NoWar member spoke out against police brutality: "When there's no more workers being targeted at antiwar protests, the targeting will still go on. But it won't be against the mostly white middle-class members of the antiwar movement. It will be against the normal, day-to-day targets of the police who are young black and Latin workers.... We need to continue the fight against police brutality at all times." We agreed but also pointed out that struggle against cop terror means understanding the role of the Democratic Party, which *administers* most inner-city police forces, including in Oakland. We said: "The cops do this every day. They can't be reformed. Their role is to enforce profit. To stand up against them we need to say that they're not our cops, that bourgeois democracy is a fraud, that the ability to choose every four years who will repress you is no democracy at all. We need to say...that it's not our troops and not our government as long as the rule of American capitalism maintains. As long as this is the capitalists' state. We need to take down the capitalist state. We in the Spartacus Youth Club are for a workers party, a workers government."■

Spartacus Youth Club Classes & Events

BOSTON

Alternate Mondays, 7 p.m.

April 28: **Defend North Korea, China, Cuba and Vietnam Against Imperialism, Capitalist Counterrevolution! For Workers' Political Revolution to Oust the Stalinist Bureaucracies!**

BU School of Education, Room 212
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

May 6: **The Revolution Betrayed**

University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis, Room TBA
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.

April 29: **Trotskyism vs. Stalinism: The Revolution Betrayed**

Columbia University
Hamilton Hall, Room 306
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

SANTA CRUZ

Friday, April 25, 6 p.m.
Marxist Readers' Circle
Defend North Korea's Right to Nuclear Weapons!

Café Pergolisse (at Cedar & Elm)
Information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

April 26: **Marxism and the Trade Unions**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)

May Day Forum
Thursday, May 1, 12:30 p.m.
UCLA, Ackerman Union 2410
Down With the Colonial Occupation of Iraq! All U.S. Troops Out of the Near East Now!

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

Visit the ICL Web Site: www.icl-fi.org

Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

> many archaeological treasures been wantonly and systematically smashed to pieces."

This imperialist conquest is a blow not only to the people of Iraq and the Near East but to working people and the oppressed the world over. Gloating over their rapid victory in what was purely and simply a one-sided slaughter, America's rulers have shown the world just how ruthless they can be in killing defenseless civilians. U.S. TV networks showed a Baghdad crowd cheering the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue, but they did not show American troops shooting up an ambulance in Baghdad the same day, killing two injured people on the way to a hospital.

As proletarian internationalists who called for the military defense of Iraq without giving any support to the Saddam Hussein regime, we say: ***Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S./British troops out of Iraq and the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism!***

U.S. Imperialism Threatens the World

Washington has wasted no time in warning the rest of the world that the same fate waits in store for any other country deemed to be defying American diktat. Apparently first in the firing line is Syria, with the White House trotting out the usual litany of war threats, claiming Syria is a "rogue state" that has "weapons of mass destruction" and is harboring former Iraqi leaders. Also on America's hit list is the North Korean deformed workers state. The *New York Times* (21 April) reports: "Hardliners in the Pentagon—and some at the White House—say that the United States should use its speedy victory in Iraq to drive home to North Korea that it could meet the same fate." We stand for the unconditional military defense of North Korea, including its right to nuclear weapons, against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution.

With the invasion over, the Bush administration's first order of domestic business is to try to push through its massive tax cut for the rich, even as unemployment continues to rise. Senate Republicans are clamoring to overturn the "sunset clauses" imposing a five-year limit on the most onerous provisions of the draconian USA-Patriot Act. Meanwhile, the administration has already unveiled a new piece of legislation, Patriot II, which would strip citizenship from Americans who "provide material support" to an organization which at some time may be deemed "terrorist" by the government. What remains of affirmative action programs set up in the wake of the civil rights movement is under the ax. In league with the government, the airline corporations have launched a frontal assault on the airline unions, imposing massive wage cuts under the threat of court-ordered bankruptcy schemes.

The world's working and semicolonial peoples are paying the price for the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. That historic defeat resulted in a catastrophic devastation of life and culture in the former Soviet Union. It has also emboldened American imperialism, proclaiming itself the "world's only superpower," to aggressively assert its dominance over the globe. While the reformist "socialists" who today proclaim themselves antiwar and anti-imperialist joined in cheering the demise of the USSR, we Trotskyists fought to the end in defense of the Soviet workers state and the collectivized property forms established by the October Revolution of 1917. This was part of our struggle for new October Revolutions around the world.

WV Map

The naked colonial aggression against Iraq is the real face of imperialism, of the irrational, anarchic, profit-driven capitalist system made even more irrational in its epoch of decay. Mass slaughter is the concentrated expression and ultimate logic of the "normal" brutal workings of the capitalist system, which daily condemns countless numbers around the world to death by malnutrition, lack of medical care and industrial murder.

The only way to put an end to imperialist war is to tear up this whole system by its roots through socialist revolution and the creation of a rational, planned economy internationally. We fight to build revolutionary workers parties as part of a reforged Trotskyist Fourth International to lead the proletariat in the struggle for power.

Zionist Neocons, Christian Fundamentalists

The takeover of Iraq "opens up all sorts of new possibilities for us," proclaimed a spokesman for the Bush administration, whose policies are increasingly determined by a cabal of Zionist neo-conservatives and Christian fundamentalists. These types are intent on again reshaping the Near East—as it was earlier reshaped by British and French imperialism after the fall of the Ottoman Empire—including through the creation of a *cordon sanitaire* between Israel and potentially hostile states. Former U.S. general Jay Garner, who is slated to be *gauleiter* of occupied Iraq, is closely linked to Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon. In the baggage train of this imperialist occupation force is Christian evangelist Franklin Graham, son of Billy Graham and a prominent fixture at this year's Pentagon Good Friday service, who has railed against Islam as a "very evil and wicked religion."

The neocons' favored choice as Garner's "native" stooge is Ahmed Chalabi, head of the U.S.-funded Iraqi National Congress (INC) and a U.S.-educated banker who fled Jordan years ago to evade a conviction for bank fraud. Chalabi's American champions extend far beyond the right wing of the Bush administration. His INC was the chief beneficiary of the Iraq Liberation Act signed by Clinton in 1998. Another longtime hooster of Chalabi is self-styled "anarchist" Noam Chomsky, who has promoted Chalahi and the Iraqi "opposition" for over a decade.

In the buildup to the 1991 Gulf War, Chomsky pushed as an "alternative" to war "the peaceful means prescribed by international law: sanctions and diplomacy" (*Z Magazine*, February 1991). Another "alternative" he promoted was Chalabi's "democratic opposition," lecturing that the media "have scrupulously avoided the Iraqi democratic forces" because "they are again calling for democracy in Iraq while Washington seeks to install some clone of Saddam Hussein" (*Lies of Our Times*, September 1991). Two years later, Chomsky complained that "the US always dismissed the Iraqi democratic opposition with disdain, including its most conservative elements, such as London-based banker Ahmed Chalabi" (*Z Magazine*, May 1993).

Only months before the passage of the Iraq Liberation Act, Chomsky again talked about how the Chalabi opposition had been an "alternative" to war in 1991, again complaining of the U.S.: "Regional opposition was regarded as a problem to be evaded, not a factor to be taken into account, any more than international law" (*Z Magazine*, April 1998). Even after Chalabi rode into Baghdad with American troops earlier this month, Chomsky said approvingly, "The US-backed opposition demands that the UN play a vital role in post-war Iraq and rejects US control of reconstruction or government" (*ZNet*, 13 April).

The current belligerence against Syria has long been a policy of the neocons' Project for a New American Century (PNAC), which in a post-9/11 letter to Bush declared that "the administration should consider appropriate measures of retaliation" against Iran and Syria, which they deemed to be "known state sponsors of terrorism." The letter continued, "Israel has been and remains America's staunchest ally against international terrorism, especially in the Middle East. The United States should fully support our fellow democracy in its fight against terrorism." The Zionist rulers have taken full advantage of the Iraq war and the massive American military presence to intensify their murderous attacks on the Palestinian people.

After months of lying war propaganda about Iraqi "weapons of mass destruction," not a single such weapon has been found by the occupation forces. But they could find hundreds of nuclear weapons in Israel. As documented by courageous Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu, who is serving an 18-year sentence for his service to humanity, the Zionist state had already acquired an arsenal of at least 200 nukes by the 1980s. To ensure its regional nuclear monopoly, Israel launched a "pre-emptive" strike against Iraq's sole nuclear reactor in 1981. From the 1960s on, Israel developed its nuclear and missile programs in collaboration with the white-supremacist regime in South Africa which, according to American satellite surveillance, carried out a nuclear test in 1979. The Zionist

Getty

Distraught Iraqi National Museum official amid artifacts destroyed by looting in U.S.-occupied Baghdad.

CNN

1983: Donald Rumsfeld, architect of murderous colonial war on Iraq, greets Saddam Husseln in Baghdad on behalf of Reagan administration.

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Colonial occupation and devastation. Left: American Marines occupy central Baghdad, April 9. Right: Baghdad home destroyed by U.S. bombing, March 31.

state and the apartheid regime jointly decided to end their nuclear collaboration in the early 1990s, when the African National Congress was about to come to power, and by the time Nelson Mandela became the country's first black president in 1994, the nukes were gone.

Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, leading lights in PNAC and the Bush administration, served as consultants to Benjamin Netanyahu when he ran for Israeli prime minister at the head of the ultra-Zionist Likud Party in 1996. But the Democrats are no less rabid in their support to Zionist Israel. Among the Congressional sponsors of the "Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act" are Democrats Eliot Engel and California Senator Barbara Boxer. Although in recent years Syria bought subsidized oil from Iraq, the Syrian rulers were by no means supporters of Saddam Hussein's Iraq—Syria backed Iran against Iraq in the 1980-88 war and supported the U.S.-led Desert Slaughter in 1991. The Syrian leadership's real crime in the eyes of both the neocons and their Democratic allies is its hostility to Israel, from whom Syria demands the return of the Golan Heights seized in 1967. *U.S. hands off Syria! Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops, settlers out of all the Occupied Territories!*

The criminal role played by the Kurdish nationalist leaders in acting as pawns for U.S. imperialism will only set the Kurdish people up for yet another betrayal. What all the regional bourgeoisies, as well as all the imperialist powers, do not want to see is the creation of an independent Kurdish state, which would challenge the stability of the bourgeois order in the Near East. This underscores that any struggle for Kurdish national liberation must be based on implacable opposition to imperialism. The Kurdish nation is divided among four capitalist countries, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey, which has threatened military intervention across the border to suppress any move toward Kurdish statehood. It is only through the overthrow of capitalist rule in these countries—establishing a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan—that the Kurdish people can finally realize national self-determination. Only within the framework of a socialist federation of the Near East can the rights of the disparate nationalities and ethnic and religious peoples of the region be guaranteed.

Only Workers Revolution Can End Imperialist War!

The war against Iraq was a naked assertion of American military superiority, not only over the Near East, but over its weaker rival imperialist powers. It is also a way for the U.S. to assert its control of the Near East oil spigot, on which Japan and West Europe are particularly reliant. Having been the driving force behind the starvation blockade for the past 12 years, the U.S. imperialists are now calling on the UN to lift the sanctions so that they can fully exploit their control over Iraq's oil wealth on the world market. At the same time, Wolfowitz has demanded that Russia, Germany and France forgive billions of dollars in debts owed them by Iraq.

The capitalist rulers of France, Germany and Russia, who posed as peace-loving opponents of American "unilateralism," are now trying to get in on the division of the spoils, including the scramble for contracts for "reconstruction" of ravaged Iraq. Behind their insistence that the UN must have a central role in reconstruction is their own thirst for profit. Chirac and the French capitalist rulers, for example, hope to hold on to massive French investments in Iraq on behalf of oil giant TotalFinaElf. But the U.S. masters insist that they fought for and stole Iraq for themselves. The contracts for rebuilding Iraq will overwhelmingly go to American corporations like Halliburton and Bechtel, for which the Bush administration essentially acts as a public relations department.

WV Photo

Boston: SL/SYC-initiated Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at March 29 antiwar demonstration.

If nothing else, this flagrant imperialist aggrandizement certainly refutes the so-called theory of globalization, which was promoted by various leftists and liberals who declared that the capitalist nation-state had been superseded by multinational corporations and international agencies like the World Bank. Capitalist imperialism is premised on the existence of and competition among distinct nation-states defending the interests of their own respective capitalists. And as the examples of Bechtel and Halliburton demonstrate, the capitalists and their government form what is essentially one large interlocking board of directors. As V. I. Lenin wrote in a 1913 article titled "Armaments and Capitalism": "Governments manage the affairs of the capitalist class, and the managers are well paid. The managers are shareholders themselves. And they shear the sheep together, under cover of speeches about 'patriotism...'."

Millions of people around the world demonstrated their opposition to this war. In Europe, Italian dock and rail workers as well as Scottish train drivers took action against the transport of munitions, showing a tiny glimpse of the social power that could be brought to bear against the imperialist war machine. There was palpable support for class-struggle actions against the war, and "left" talking union leaders made fiery speeches about union opposition to the war, until such time as the bombing began. Then they predictably rallied behind their own governments. In Britain, the Trades Union Congress refused even to participate in a ten-minute European-wide work stoppage against the war. In Germany and France, the labor misleaders rallied behind their "antiwar" imperialist governments, refusing to lift a finger to mount independent labor action once the bombing began.

It is patently clear that the biggest antiwar demonstrations in the world had no effect whatsoever on the war-crazed American ruling class. Yet the reformist antiwar organizers continue to sing the same class-collaborationist "unity" refrain that what was needed to stop the war was the broadest possible movement, by which they meant an alliance with "antiwar" Democratic politicians like Jesse Jackson. Today, the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) promises more of the same: "The new antiwar movement has made great strides. But it has to become larger and broader still" (*Socialist Worker*, 4 April).

Workers World Party (WWP), the dominant force behind the International ANSWER coalition, now proclaims that the movement must recognize "the Iraqis' right to resist the occupation." But right through to the end of the war, ANSWER refused to raise any slogans that hinted at taking the side of Iraq in the conflict—because that would have precluded Democratic Party politicians from speaking on its platforms. Even now, WWP upholds the slogan "stop the war on Iraq before it starts" because it "allowed the movement to put the greatest number of people in motion on a progressive basis" (*Workers World*, 17 April).

To build an antiwar movement with bourgeois politicians is to build an antiwar movement with representatives of the very class in whose interest imperialist war is waged. As Marxists, we fight for the unity of the international proletariat in struggle against its capitalist class enemy, which means a merciless political struggle against those who preach "unity" with the capitalists in the name of building a "larger and broader" movement.

From the beginning of the drive to war, we have told the truth, insisting that the struggle against imperialist war cannot be separated from the struggle against the capitalist system that breeds war. Genuine opposition to war must be based on class struggle and political protest independent of all the political parties of capitalist rule. U.S. imperialism's conquest of Iraq will only strengthen the ability of the ruling class to plunder the world. The rapacious U.S. ruling class must be swept away through workers revolution. The Spartacist League is committed to forging the multiracial revolutionary workers party needed to lead that struggle to victory in the bastion of world imperialism.■

International Communist League

(Fourth Internationalist)

International Center: Box 7429 GPO, New York, NY 10116, USA
Web site: www.icl-fi.org

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Fort Worth, Texas

Victory to the Lockheed Strike!

Four thousand workers went on strike against Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., the world's leading producer of fighter aircraft, when their contract expired at midnight on April 14. International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Local Lodge 776 is fighting a company bloated with orders for its F-16 and F-2 fighter jets and raking in hundreds of millions in profits since the last contract was signed in 2000 following an 18-day strike.

It is significant that workers are striking against a military contractor on the heels of the bloody U.S. colonial war against Iraq. The company supplies only a couple of planes a month to the American military but also makes sections of the F/A 22 and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, which are both coming into production for the U.S. The plant is also a major supplier of such American allies as Israel, Egypt, Japan and Greece and has just procured a $6 billion order from Poland.

Feeling their strength with the company desperate to fill its fat order books, the workers voted 85 percent in favor of the strike. After paltry pay increases in the previous contract, the company is offering 10 percent over three years (plus a $1,500 contract ratification bonus) while demanding significant increases in workers' contributions to medical benefits, despite the company's huge profits. As a strike captain told a local NBC affiliate, "The proposed raises in the contract will be eaten up by increases in medical co-pays and prescription co-pays." The company also wants to cut jobs by changing work rules.

While a handful of machinists have crossed the picket lines, the vast majority of the union has remained solid, including some 1,700 workers hired since the last contract. But the union tops are undermining the membership's determination to fight as other unions in the plant—the IBEW, OPEIU office workers and FITSU process planners—are crossing picket lines with the blessings of the IAM bureaucrats! While the other unions "pledged" not to do struck work, the company announced at the outset that its managers would keep production going, and in fact parts for the F-16 are being produced. ***Picket lines mean don't cross!*** There should be one industrial union for all Lockheed workers with a common contract expiration, including with other plants in Marietta, Georgia and Palmdale and Sunnyvale, California.

A solid strike that shuts the plant down is necessary for the union to fight against the company's divisive wage scheme, in which it takes workers ***more than 20 years*** to reach top pay. As IAM official Bob Wood told *WV*, assembly workers start at about $10 per hour and top out at $20. Furthermore, Wood said, up to a fifth of the IAM members will retire in the near future, leaving a large number of workers at substandard pay. This includes a number of women workers and many blacks, Latinos and Asians, who make up some 40 percent of the IAM workforce. The union should be fighting for equal pay for equal work!

The IAM strikers are fighting an intransigent employer in a "right to work" state where barely over 5 percent of workers are unionized. For the unions to win in the "open shop" South requires fighting head-on the entrenched racist oppression that has long been used to divide workers and keep unions out. And that means fighting against the policies of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which chains labor's power through its allegiance to the capitalist Democratic Party and its support to U.S. imperialism's military adventures. AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney early on endorsed the U.S. rulers' "global war on terror," which has meant military slaughter from Afghanistan to Iraq and a domestic war against immigrant rights and the rights of the entire population, with the labor movement the ultimate target. Labor needs a leadership that understands that the hard struggle needed to defeat the union-busters requires the independence of the working class from the capitalist parties.

Victory to the Lockheed strike!

AP

Anarchism...

(continued from page 3)

better impulses than to buy into Arab bourgeois nationalism end up standing on the sidelines at the very moment when the survival of the Palestinian people is at stake, with the Zionist butchers poised to use the imminent onset of the Americans' Iraq war as the signal to drive the multiply oppressed Palestinian masses out of "Greater Israel."

We Trotskyists militarily defend the Palestinian people against Zionist terror while giving no quarter politically to the bourgeois Arab regimes, the secular-nationalist PLO or the Islamic fundamentalists who have come to the fore as the bankruptcy of the PLO has been demonstrated. At the antiwar protests, the TL has proudly carried our banner proclaiming: *Defend the Palestinian People! No U.S./Canadian/UN Intervention! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!*

The Spanish Revolution of the 1930s powerfully illustrates the political bankruptcy of anarchism, both on the distinction between military and political support and on the defense of peoples oppressed by imperialism. The Trotskyists joined with the Republican forces in fighting the right-wing Francoists, while giving no support to the "democratic" capitalist government. Throughout, the Trotskyists fought for the *independent* mobilization of the proletariat necessary to the program of socialist revolution against the Spanish bourgeoisie. In contrast, the false leaders of the working class—including the large and influential anarchist CNT/FAI—politically subordinated the workers to the capitalist Republican forces. In late 1936, leaders of the CNT committed ***class treason*** by joining the capitalist government. Refusing to fight for proletarian power, they thus doomed the revolution, leading to the victory of Franco.

The anarchists' failure to champion the subjugated people of Spanish Morocco against their colonial overlords was particularly treacherous. The Republican government, of which the anarchist CNT was a part, refused to grant independence to Morocco. Far from opposing this, anarchist spokesmen echoed crude nationalist and patriotic sentiments against the Moroccan people. An uncompromising campaign for Morocco's independence would have undermined a base for the Francoists and struck a blow against the French and British colonialists as well. As it was, this chauvinist loyalty to the imperialist oppressor contributed to the defeat of the revolution.

The putative leftist elements among today's anarchists, lacking a program that expresses the independent interests of the working class, end up standing aloof when the biggest imperialists on the planet rain death and destruction on the working people of the "Third World." Our call to defend Iraq against imperialism is aimed above all at the working class here at home, seeking to rally it in class struggle against the imperialist warmongers. As the revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky explained in the founding document of the Fourth International in 1938, "Giving aid in a just and progressive war, the revolutionary proletariat wins the sympathy of the workers in the colonies"; at the same time, this strengthens its ability to struggle for the overthrow of the imperialist masters.

Anarchist indifference to national oppression also plays out in Canada in the opposition of groups like NEFAC to Quebec independence. The working class of this country is deeply split along national lines, the result of more than two centuries of subjugation of the francophone Québécois by the dominant Anglo ruling class. This has long served to undermine proletarian struggle against capitalism. In their own way, the February 15 antiwar demonstrations reflected this deep national divide. While the protests in English Canada were awash in Maple Leaf flags, the *fleurdelysé* was everywhere at the huge, heavily trade-union demonstration in Montreal. In sharp contrast to the anarchists (and the rest of the left), the TL has prominently featured our call for Quebec independence on antiwar protests. This is crucial for cutting against the dominant Anglo chauvinism and more generally for getting the national question off the agenda, thereby clearing the road for class struggle against both the English Canadian and Québécois bourgeoisies.

Our fight for class struggle against the rulers in this country aims at cutting through the "Canada the good" nationalism of the capitalists, bringing to the workers the understanding that they uniquely have the social power to defeat the system of imperialism through workers revolution. This perspective requires a sharp break with the social-democratic NDP and union misleaders. Far from a partial step toward socialism, they are an *obstacle* which keeps workers shackled to their own exploiters.

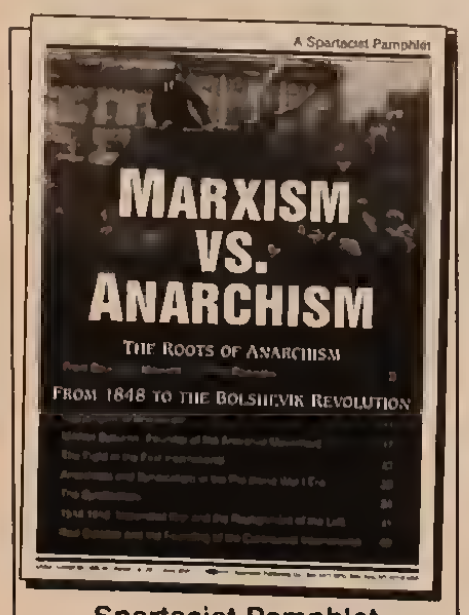
It is the working class—men and women, immigrant and native-born, English Canadian and Québécois—that makes the wheels of this society turn. The capitalists' "war on terror" has massively increased the powers of state repression against immigrants and refugees. In the not-so-long term, this is all aimed at the working class and its organizations. Already new "security" regulations target port workers for stepped up surveillance and union-busting repression. It is in the direct interest of the working class, with its large and strategic immigrant component, to oppose the rampage of the capitalist rulers down the line, from the war on Iraq to the war on workers and immigrants at home.

There is much anger among working people, both against the incessant attacks on jobs and social programs and against the looming war. At a 2,000-strong union protest against health care cuts in Vancouver on March 1, members of the heavily immigrant Hospital Employees Union eagerly bought our press which prominently featured an article on workers struggles against the war in Italy. The impact of labor's collective social power mobilized in strike action in political opposition to this war would be immense. Such opposition to imperialism based on an anti-capitalist perspective would profoundly alter the political landscape in favor of working people and the oppressed.

Reformist leftists like the I.S. make much of their role in building the broad "unity" of the antiwar movement. But as James Burnham, a leader of the Workers Party, then the American Trotskyist organization, argued in his 1936 pamphlet "War and the Workers":

> "To suppose, therefore, that revolutionists can work out a common 'program against the war' with non-revolutionists is a fatal illusion. Any organization based upon such a program is not only powerless to prevent war; in practice it acts to promote war, both because it serves in its own way to uphold the system that breeds war, and because it diverts the attention of its members from the real fight against war. There is only *one* program against war: the program *for* revolution—the program of the revolutionary party of the workers."

If today's upsurge of opposition to war is not to be squandered in an "antiwar" movement that at best upholds the racist imperialist status quo, it must be directed against the capitalist exploiters. Our aim is to build a revolutionary workers party that will fuse working-class opposition to war with the simmering discontent over the capitalists' incessant attacks on workers, immigrants and all the oppressed. As the rivalries between the imperialist powers intensify with terrifying rapidity, future full-scale wars are presaged that will encompass all the imperialist powers, posing the spectre of a nuclear holocaust. Only world socialist revolution can save human beings from such barbarism. ■



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Iraq Women...

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and anti-woman bigotry for the glory of god. Just one graphic example now in the news: a nine-year-old girl in Nicaragua was made pregnant as a result of rape. Her parents arranged an abortion for her—and they went through hell to get it. Now the Catholic church has launched a crusade against abortion across Central America to prevent things like this from happening again.

It's a truism to refer to the great Muslim civilization of the eighth and ninth centuries, when Baghdad was the Paris of the world and Europe was in the Dark Ages. They gave us algebra, Arabic numbers and many other key inventions. But do you know about the role of the Spanish crown and the Inquisition in destroying the civilization of Andalus in southern Spain in the later Middle Ages? Not only did they brutally massacre Muslims and Jews of all classes, but they burned thousands upon thousands of books of mathematics, astronomy, medicine, poetry. The Christians also destroyed the public baths because bathing was considered a sign of Muslim faith. Only heretics took baths. Now you know why the Spanish queen Isabella never washed.

The Spanish soldiers went on to become the conquistadors that instigated the genocide of the native peoples of the New World. (The Muslims and Jews were driven out of Andalus in the same year that Columbus discovered America.) Christianity, however, had to adapt with the advent of capitalism in Europe and the development of a modern industrial society—that was basically the reason for the Protestant Reformation and the breaking of the dominance of the Catholic church over much of Europe. Its ideology therefore became more compliant to capitalist social relations, as opposed to prefeudal or medieval.

In the precapitalist society where Islam first developed (seventh-century Arabia), there was a strategic relationship between the institution of the family, the subordination of women and primitive agricultural production, herding, land and water rights. Women were their father's means of exchange through the bride price and were their husband's chattel. The polygamous family became the mechanism by which inheritance and property was organized. For inheritance to mean anything, of course, the chief has got to be able to be sure it's really his child. The subordination of women through polygamy, the bride price, the veil—these are not "bad ideas" thought up by bossy men or even the result of religious ideology, but a means of enforcing property rights in a very backward rural society. As long as the poverty and backwardness remained, the status of women was not going to improve.

AP

1997: Baghdad soup kitchen. UN starvation sanctions have led to deaths of some 1.5 million Iraqis.

Iraq: Uneven and Combined Development

If anything, it tended to get worse in Iraq into the 20th century, including after the British took over after World War I. As ancient tribal social relations eroded along with the nomadic way of life, they were replaced with virtual serfdom. Tribal communal lands became the private fiefdoms of sheiks who became landlords. The former nomadic warriors were subjected to forced labor on the sheik's land. Peasant women were in certain areas little more than chattel; they could be awarded in *fasl*, a way of settling a tribal dispute by giving away a girl or woman instead of drawing blood. This is only one example of women's subordinate status. Relying upon the backing of the sheiks and landlords, British policies strengthened these oppressive customs and sought to reverse the erosion of the tribes. For example, they instituted two separate legal codes in Iraq, one for the countryside based on tribal law and another for the cities (see Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* [1978]). This is a clear example of the Marxist point that imperialism will ally with backward social and political forces to reinforce its power.

Ownership of the land was concentrated in the hands of a few families. Desperate peasants, unable to scratch out a living on tiny plots of arid land, fled to the shantytowns ringing Baghdad, where they lived in one-room mud huts, *sarifas*. Limited land reforms initiated in 1958 broke up much of the large-scale landed property owned by the sheiks and merchants; however, the peasants, unable to afford the costs of modern agricultural techniques, remained as poor as ever.

But side by side with this rural poverty was a developing modern industry—oil. Oil production went from 4.6 million tons in 1946 to 35.8 million tons in 1958. However, the enormous profits from oil went to the British-controlled Iraq Petroleum Company—straight into the imperialists' pockets. In 1972, the Iraqi regime nationalized the oil industry, bringing enormous wealth to the country and enabling it to embark on rapid industrialization and the construction of a modern infrastructure (see Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship* [2001]).

Paxton/NY Times

Woman doctor in Iraqi clinic. Right: In U.S.-backed Saudi Arabia, women remain imprisoned in head-to-toe veil.

This could not have happened without massive Soviet aid. Such Soviet government aid in technology, funding and military might enabled Third World countries like Iraq to have some room to maneuver against the imperialist powers. The result of Iraq's modernization was the emergence and expansion of a broad middle class and urbanization of nearly 70 percent of the population by 1980. The growth of the labor force impacted the status of women in a big way, because their labor was needed in Iraq, which, along with Iran, is unique in the Gulf states in having an indigenous working class.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, massive campaigns eradicated illiteracy among both men and women. Schooling was made compulsory for children. As an Arabic adage puts it, "Books are written in Cairo, published in Beirut and read in Baghdad." Iraq produced more doctors, engineers and scientists than any other country in the Near East. All university graduates, men and women, were granted automatic employment. By law women had equal rights to employment. The percentage of women in the workforce reached over 40 percent; in professions like teaching and the pharmaceutical industry, it was well over 50 percent. Laws were passed to enable women to work closer to home and they were provided with free transportation.

Health care and contraception were free and housing was subsidized. A working woman could take a maternity leave of one year, six months with full pay and six months at half pay. Workplaces had free or heavily subsidized day-care centers and nursing mothers were allowed two hours a day to breast-feed their babies. Polygamy was illegal. Iraq had the first and probably the only women's soccer team in the region. Women's sports were regularly broadcast on television where women appeared in shorts and swimsuits, a phenomenon unheard of in the rest of the region, except in Israel.

However, as real as these gains were, they were limited to the urban centers, necessarily partial and highly contradictory. Most fundamentally, their impact rose and fell with the needs of the labor market and the economy. For example, the eight-year war with Iran had a huge impact on the status of women. With hundreds of thousands of men in the armed forces, women joined the labor force in large numbers. But at the same time, the regime banned the use of contraceptives to force women to "produce" more future citizens to make up for the loss of lives during the war. The end of the war in 1988 and the demobilization of men and their return to the workforce marked the end of Iraqi women's heyday. Employment for women shrank sharply.

The bourgeois Ba'ath Party espouses a populist-nationalist ideology as it crushes all workers resistance. Its opposition to the U.S.-backed Zionist state of Israel and its drive to wrest its oil industry from the imperialists resulted in a certain empty anti-imperialist rhetoric. So, for example, the Iraqi government declared fulsome support for the Palestinian cause. During the 1970 massacre of Palestinians by the Jordanian army, known as Black September, Iraq pledged aid for the Palestinians. But this did not happen.

The regime that postured as "progressive" also espoused rhetoric about the liberation of women. Saddam Hussein called for "the complete emancipation of women from the ties which held them back in the past" (quoted in Doreen Ingrams, *The Awakened: Women in Iraq* [1983]). While it's hard to imagine George W. Bush even saying that, Hussein didn't mean it. The Ba'ath declared Islam the state religion in 1969. Countries of the Near East, Israel included, never realized the ideal of separation between established religion and state. Centuries of decay under Ottoman rule effectively sealed the region from the effects of the Reformation and the European bourgeois revolutions that broke the hold of the old feudal social relations there. The imperialist rule that followed arrested the development of the Near East and reinforced the existing backward precapitalist order. After independence these countries co-opted religion and incorporated it into the state apparatus. With no exception, Muslim countries in the region inscribe in their constitution that "Islamic law is the principal source of all legislation."

Family law in Iraq is largely drawn from the Islamic code of the *sharia*. By law, as of 1983 a woman could inherit only half of what her brother or other male relative inherits (this is straight from the Koran), and she could not divorce her husband unless this right was recognized in the marriage contract before the marriage. While Muslim men can legally marry non-Muslims, Muslim women cannot. Abortion is illegal. The General Federation of Iraqi Women, the Ba'ath Party's women's wing, defends Islam as providing "equality for both sexes." Its president, considered to be the First Lady of Iraq, wears the veil.

Even in the cities, the modern existed

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Iraq Women...

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side by side with holdovers from the ancient ways. Khairallah Tulfah, Saddam Hussein's uncle, who was appointed mayor of Baghdad shortly after the Ba'athists came to power, is best known in the West for his bigoted government pamphlet called "Three Whom God Should Not Have Created: Persians, Jews, and Flies." Baghdad women grew to fear his legion of employed vigilantes who pounced on them in public to paint their legs black if they were considered to be showing too much leg. Finally he got to be too much even for Hussein, who had to remove him.

Women and the UN Sanctions

Under the sanctions, with widespread unemployment and the disappearance of public services such as free transportation and childcare facilities, women were driven back into the home. With over 50 percent of the schools destroyed and the lack of instructional materials (computers and writing materials are not allowed under the sanctions), the literacy rate among women plummeted to 45 percent. Many children no longer attend school; in 1997-98, for example, the dropout rate was 53 percent. And many children work to supplement family income. Many men have either died in the military slaughter of the Iran-Iraq War and the 1991 Gulf War or left the country to escape the bleak economic conditions. This results in a high number of female-headed households, putting the brunt of the sanctions on women. A reported 95 percent of pregnant Iraqi women are anemic. The maternal death rate, 37 per 1,000 in 1990, more than tripled in the next 18 months to over 140 per 1,000. An estimated 4,000 to 5,000 children die every month. And this is before the UN's "food for oil" program was suspended with the beginning of the war.

A country that used to import 75 to 80 percent of its food has been forced to resort to local production, meaning a massive deurbanization of a wide section of the population with attendant conservatizing effects and restrictions that target women. The fathomless misery and fear have driven the population into such despair that, as Nuha Al-Radi writes in *Baghdad Diaries* (2003), a father, no longer able to provide for his family, fed them a poisoned fish and they all died together. She tells stories of parents beating their children so that they would be hospitalized, because the hospital was the only place where they could get fed. The people of Iraq have sought solace in the comfort of religion, what Marx called "the opiate of the people."

In the last decade, the country has seen a surge in religious sentiment that is encouraged by the regime. To appease local and regional reactionary religious forces, Hussein launched a mosque-building spree and adopted the habit of frequently peppering his speeches with religious maxims. He added the words "god is great" to the national flag on the eve of the '91 war. Unable to patch together a national front of rival ethnic groups, Hussein was attempting to rally them under a religious banner. Preachers at Friday prayers invoke historic Islamic battles and urge worshippers to fight the "infidel" invaders. Superstitious beliefs of all kinds are on the increase as people turn to witchcraft and exorcism, or *zar*.

With the surge in religiosity comes an increase in conservative practices that target women. According to the newspaper *Al-Hayat* (15 June 2000), Hussein declared that women should no longer work outside the home—and gave as the reason that they bought dresses and shoes when they did! A Baghdad mullah decreed that the solution to the food crisis included telling girls to fast every other day—until one teenager fainted in her class. In a country where Johnnie Walker whisky once enjoyed a state subsidy, women are now pushed into wearing the veil. Hussein, who once told a congress of the General Federation of Iraqi Women that "polygamy ought to be condemned in every corner of our society," has taken a second wife. Polygamy and forced and arranged marriages, once confined to the rural south, are now common in the urban centers. Nadje Al-Ali, an Iraqi historian who is a professor at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies in Exeter, Britain, describes in "Women, Gender Relations and Sanctions in Iraq" (www.acttogether.org) how her aunts and cousins, who had never worn the *hijab* in the past, were now veiled and prayed regularly. And this is the educated, elite layer.

The so-called "honor" killings of women are on the rise across the country and they are sanctioned by the regime. Under recent laws, men who kill female relatives for "immoral deeds" (which include not only having sex outside marriage or getting pregnant but also running away from home or even being suspected of doing these things) are considered innocent, since the murders are committed for the sake of "honor." In December 1991 in a TV broadcast, Hussein told Iraqis, "If you see a woman or her daughters flirting on the street, or if you suspect misconduct, you are a people's council. You are allowed to kick that family out of the neighborhood and confiscate their house" (quoted in Jan Goodwin, *Price of Honor: Muslim Women Lift the Veil of Silence on the the Islamic World* [2003]).

What makes this horror even worse is that, as you would expect, prostitution is on the increase among Iraqi women. So they have to endure not only the degradation of prostitution but the threat of murder from their own families. Most of the female prostitutes in Jordan, for example, are Iraqis. When the Jordanian government complained about this, Iraq imposed the *mahram* escort for women under the age of 45 who travel abroad. A *mahram* is a close relative who acts as a male chaperon.

New York Times

Mass demonstration in Baghdad, July 1958. Revolutionary upsurge brought Iraqi proletariat to the brink of power.

The Iraqi Communist Party

The country of Iraq was artificially carved up by the victorious imperialist powers out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. In fact, anticipating the demise of the Ottomans, France and Britain negotiated a secret treaty, Sykes-Picot, sketching out areas of domination in the Near East. Britain got the three former Ottoman provinces that became Iraq, more or less randomly cobbled together out of a part of mountainous Kurdistan to the north, bits of the territories of the Assyrians and Turkomans, and the Arabic-speaking lands to the south. The country was 97 percent Muslim, with 65 percent Shi'ites, concentrated in the south and historically linked to neighboring Persia (Iran).

Kuwait was carved out of the Ottoman province of Basra as a separate country. In the words of the British War Office, the purpose was "to limit [Iraq's] influence in the gulf and keep it dependent on Britain." The wealthier classes and the traditional rulers of the society were primarily Sunni Muslim, as had been the old Ottoman overlords. The British continued this tradition, making the Sunnis their agents and exacerbating ethnic and religious tensions. The so-called king of Iraq was a Hashemite tribal chief—not even from the area—elevated to the throne by his majesty's troops. In 1932 Iraq became formally independent, but Britain continued to dominate the country in every way.

Trotsky's program of permanent revolution teaches:

> "With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving ***democracy and national emancipation*** is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leaders of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses."

The Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), once the largest and most proletarian Communist party in the Arab world, was based in all sectors of the working class. In 1958-59, the party had probably the best chance at seizing power and overturning the capitalist system of any such party in the Near East, ever. Why this opportunity did not result in a new October Revolution in Iraq is a crucial question, one whose lessons must be assimilated by all revolutionaries seeking to forge genuine Leninist parties in the Near East.

Founded in 1935, by 1948 the ICP was the dominant force in a nationwide upsurge against the presence of British military bases—an example of the necessary leading role of the proletariat. There were mass mobilizations and strikes such as the Communist-led strike of oil workers near Hidatha. The extent to which the government would go to defend British interests was shown by the crackdown that brought the upsurge to an end. Hundreds of Communists were arrested and ICP leader Fahd and two other members of the Political Bureau were publicly hanged. Their bodies were left on public display for several days as a warning.

The ICP was able to organize across national, religious and ethnic lines and to address the woman question in Iraq. The League for the Defense of Women's Rights, founded in 1952, had 40,000 members at its height, and a Communist women's weekly, *14 July*, was published from 1958 to 1963. The party sought to recruit Kurdish workers and published a Kurdish newspaper. By the early 1950s, one-third of the party's leadership were Kurds. From its inception, the ICP called for the Kurds' right to independence. But this principled position was abandoned in the mid 1950s. Pressured by the Kremlin, Stalinists throughout the Near East courted the Arab nationalist regimes like Nasser's Egypt. The ICP criticized its previous stance "that there exist two main national groups in Iraq," declaring that "the fraternal Kurdish people has no interests which are incompatible with the interests of any of the Arab countries."

Lessons of 1958

After World War II, the support of Britain and the U.S. for the Zionist state of Israel contributed to an upsurge of Arab nationalism across the region. When Britain, France and Israel invaded Egypt in 1956 in response to Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, the ICP launched a campaign against the government that triggered mass uprisings in the Communist strongholds of Najaf and Hayy. Two years later in July 1958, the Free Officers movement overthrew the monarchy. Upon hearing the news, hundreds of thousands of Baghdad's dispossessed poured into the streets screaming their joy and their hatred of the British and the royal family. But the ICP threw its support behind the government headed by Brigadier Abd al-Karim Qassim (Kassem) and called for "a democratic federal republic" with unity of all the Arab peoples "of all classes." Qassim tried to play off the ICP against the pan-Arab nationalists in the officer corps as well as the Ba'ath Party, who were clamoring for Iraq to merge into Nasser's newly formed United Arab Republic. The drive for unity with Egypt was motivated by the desire of the Ba'ath and other Arab nationalists to use Nasser's authority and Egypt's anti-Communist laws to break the growing power of the Communists.

The imperialist overlords in Washington and London were quite alarmed by the downfall of the king and the ensuing revolutionary upsurge, which removed a main pillar of the Anglo-American anti-Soviet alliance in the Near East and threatened capitalist rule itself. American Marines were landed in Lebanon and British paratroopers were flown into Jordan in a menacing move aimed at the Iraqi masses.

By late summer, a peasant insurrection was sweeping across the agricultural plains of Iraq as peasants burned landlords' estates, destroyed the account ledgers and seized the land. The forces of reaction were frantically organizing to crush the revolutionary wave. In March 1959, nationalist officers and the Ba'ath, backed by the large landowners and tribal chiefs, prepared to launch a counterrevolutionary coup starting from the city of Mosul. The ICP wrecked this scheme by organizing a demonstration of 250,000 people, triggering an upsurge that swept the reactionaries from the streets.

The Communists dominated the labor unions, the peasants organizations and the union of students. But with the question of proletarian state power posed, all the ICP demanded was representation in the capitalist government. They continued to hold that the task was to create a native

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Iraqi capitalist government, according to the Stalinist dogma of "two-stage" revolution. Mammoth rallies, some over one million strong, swept Baghdad to support the ICP's demand. Army units loyal to the ICP broke open arsenals and distributed weapons.

Marxist historian Isaac Deutscher describes what happened next. Soviet Stalinist chief Khrushchev was about to meet with imperialist chief Eisenhower at Camp David. In order to make this meeting more congenial, he ordered the Iraqi CP to stand down. Says Deutscher:

> "Most Western observers on the spot agreed that Kassem could hardly hold his ground against an all-out communist offensive. His own following was small, and he refused to try and rally the anti-communist forces which were intimidated and disorganized and for whose support Nasser made a bid when he attacked Kassem as a 'communist stooge.'
>
> "Then, in the summer, the communist offensive was suddenly called off—on urgent demands from Moscow. In Moscow reports about the rising revolutionary temperature of Iraq had caused alarm. Khrushchev refused to countenance a communist upheaval in Baghdad, afraid that this would provoke renewed Western intervention in the Eastern Mediterranean, set the Middle East aflame, and wreck his policy of peaceful coexistence. He was already reckoning with the prospect of his visit to Washington and was anxious to produce evidence of Soviet 'goodwill' in the Middle East.
>
> "A bill of indictment against the Iraqi communist leaders was drawn up in Moscow and the Iraqi Party was ordered not merely to make its peace with Kassem, but to surrender to him unconditionally with only a minimum of face-saving."

Qassim and the anti-Communist nationalists now took the offensive. Bloody encounters took place between Ba'athist gangs and Communists in Baghdad; Communist trade-union leaders were killed, removed from their posts or rounded up by the police. In Kirkuk, the largely Kurdish CP organization turned an incipient revolt into a communalist massacre of Turkomans, who were prominent in the city's commercial elite. The Kirkuk massacre was used by Qassim as a pretext for suppressing the Communist Party.

This attempt to make a deal with the ruling class did not gain the Communists any good will—it only allowed the ruling class a breathing space to reassemble their forces. When the Ba'ath came to power briefly in 1963 in a CIA-backed coup, it unleashed the counterrevolutionary furies. With the help of the CIA, an estimated 5,000 Communists were killed and thousands more jailed. After the Ba'athists regained power in 1968, they took up where they had left off—with trials of Jews, Communists and oppositionists, while laying waste to the Kurdish regions.

The intervention of even a relatively small Trotskyist party could have split the Communist organizations, winning revolutionary-minded workers and intellectuals away from their Stalinist misleaders. This is the road to forging authentic Leninist vanguard parties in the region. Such a party must inscribe on its banner the program of the permanent revolution and intransigent opposition to every form of oppression—of women, of national, ethnic and religious minorities, as well as of homosexuals and others.

Today the war brings the question of Kurdistan once more to the fore. Defense of the right of self-determination for the Kurdish people is a crucial obligation for would-be communists in Turkey and Iraq as well as Iran and Syria. The Near Eastern working classes must be won to a perspective of upholding the national rights of the Kurds, defending Kurdish organizations against state terror and championing full and equal rights for the Kurdish language. Only by fighting all manifestations of Turkish and Iraqi chauvinism and national oppression can the road be opened for joint struggle among the workers against their common capitalist oppressors. The rights of the Kurdish people can only be guaranteed by proletarian socialist revolutions to smash the capitalist states that oppress them—Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. To achieve this, it is necessary to build Leninist-Trotskyist parties that unite the working people of different national and ethnic backgrounds. Such parties will inscribe on their banner the call for a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan, part of a socialist federation of the Near East.

The Rise of Political Islam

The betrayal of socialist revolution, such as happened in Iraq in 1958-59, is the backdrop to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism as a mass movement in the last two decades. With the bankruptcy of the nationalist governments and in the absence of a viable communist alternative, political Islam feeds off the despair and anger of the masses. Islamic fundamentalism poses as an anti-imperialist force, the savior from mass poverty and the promoter of social justice through upholding the "word of god" and Islamic law.

Imperialism has sought to drown in blood every movement for emancipation from the centuries-old chains of tradition and the exploitation of the landlords and the capitalists. In this aim, institutionalized religion has been one of its main tools and the rights of women one of the main casualties. Arch-Cold Warrior John Foster Dulles—the U.S. secretary of state in 1958 at the time of the Iraqi revolution—earlier urged U.S. imperialism to make common cause with the "religions of the East" against "Communist atheism and materialism."

While there are many examples of this, probably the most glaring is Afghanistan. In 1979, a civil war between the modernizing Kabul regime and the tribal *mujahedin* broke out. In dispute was the government's move to introduce a few rather minor reforms—like reducing the bride price, not even abolishing it. To protect its borders from the fundamentalist threat, the Soviet Union sent in the Red Army to defend Kabul. Whatever the Kremlin's motive, nevertheless the Red Army's presence was defending the rights of the women of Afghanistan. Its opponents, the *mujahedin*, were shooting schoolteachers for teaching girls how to read and throwing acid in the faces of unveiled women. And on their side was the United States, arming and funding them in what was the largest CIA operation in history.

We said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and called on the Soviets to extend the gains of October to the people of Afghanistan. What were those gains? Just across the border, Central Asia had once been exactly like Afghanistan—a miserably backward, desolate and benighted place. But in the 1920s, Soviet power came to Central Asia. To be sure, even the most powerful government cannot decree social advancement—it must be built. In 50 years, Soviet Central Asia had moved forward ten centuries because it had been transformed from a backward, tribal area by a socialized, planned economy.

The planned economy is a tremendous force for revolutionary change. Because its central dynamic is to maximize the socially productive labor of all citizens, women are a necessary part of the workforce. Stalin—no champion of the liberation of women—nevertheless saw no reason why women should not be drawn into industry. The first Five Year Plans, which transformed the USSR from a largely peasant country into an industrial power, mobilized women en masse, and could not have succeeded without them. In contrast, under capitalist production of commodities for the market, the exploitation of labor for profit drives the capitalist to not hire women at all, or to hire them at a lower wage—because, for example, they can be more expensive to train and they tend to leave their jobs for marriage or children.

VAAP

Petrograd, March 1917: Women's demonstration with banner reading "As Long As the Woman Is a Slave There Can't Be Freedom—Long Live Women's Equality." October Revolution opened the road to women's emancipation.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Upon coming to power in 1917, the Bolsheviks put into practice a number of crucial measures to begin the liberation of women. They made marriage and divorce simple matters of civil registration, entirely independent of the reactionary Russian Orthodox church, as part of an early decree giving women equal rights with men. Insofar as the poverty of the country allowed, they established communal kitchens, laundries and childcare centers to free women from the drudgery of housework—measures which sought to bring women into the workforce and into political life and lay the basis for replacing the family with socialized alternatives.

They abolished all laws regarding consensual sexual relations (laws against sodomy, fornication, homosexuality) because they thought the state had no business interfering in private sexual matters. In 1919, the Communist Party created the Department of Working Women and Peasant Women, or Zhenotdel, to organize special work among women, which included building over 25,000 literacy schools and donning the veil to reach the women of the Muslim East.

The gains made by women in the Soviet Union are one of the reasons why Trotskyists stood for unconditional military defense of the USSR against imperialist threats and internal counterrevolution. Stalin turned back the clock on many of the gains of women—for example, abortion was made illegal in 1936—but the enormous power of the planned economy remained, however deformed it was by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

In Iraq today, the task is to fully mobilize the workers and rural toilers against American imperialism. A Leninist-Trotskyist party in Iraq today would seek to combine the struggle for national independence against the U.S. with a social revolution against the Iraqi capitalists and landlords.

Trotsky stressed that "the subsequent fate of the [proletarian] dictatorship and socialism depends in the last analysis not only and not so much upon the national productive forces as upon the development of the international socialist revolution." Today in the Near East, the struggle against imperialism cannot be resolved within the confines of a single country. Justice for the Palestinian people, national emancipation for the Kurds, freedom from the veil and Islamic law for women require sweeping away the capitalist regimes from Iran to Egypt and establishing a socialist federation of the Near East.

These struggles must be linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of Europe, North America and Japan. Throughout the imperialist centers, immigrant workers and their children represent a living bridge with the former colonies and link oppressed immigrants to the power of the proletariat as a whole. The fight against war and for the liberation of the workers and oppressed needs a revolutionary instrument of struggle, an internationalist Trotskyist party, to lead the workers to power and wrest the means of production from the hands of the imperialist rulers. We must have an international planned economy in a socialist world. We in the International Communist League are dedicated to this task. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Iraq

Women's Liberation and the Struggle Against Imperialist Subjugation

We print below in edited form a presentation by Spartacist League speaker and former Women and Revolution *editor Amy Rath at a forum in New York City on March 29.*

Women and Revolution

As we meet here today, American and British forces are moving north toward Baghdad and bombs rain down on the city. In the war against Iraq, the International Communist League clearly takes a side. We stand for the military defense of Iraq without giving an ounce of political support to the Saddam Hussein regime. Hussein is a bloody oppressor of Iraqi workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims and the Kurdish people. His Ba'ath Party regime defends the existing social relations in Iraq and perpetuates the enslavement of women.

I'm speaking here today in honor of International Women's Day. In 2003, the women of Iraq illustrate the status of most of the world's women, caught between the domination of imperialism and the oppression of stifling ancient "customs" like the veil, holdovers from a more backward era. For the past 12 years, American imperialism, under the guise of the United Nations, has imposed death and disease on Iraq through the starvation blockade. Out of a population of some 23 or 24 million, one and a half million Iraqis have already died from the effects of the sanctions—from starvation and lack of medical supplies. Between the blockade and the bombing, the economic infrastructure of the country has been damaged or destroyed—including power, sewage and water plants, food processing plants, irrigation facilities, pharmaceutical plants and hospitals. And Iraqi women have suffered more than their share of this misery. The imperialist vendetta against Iraq has thrown the country backward, reviving and reinforcing conservative and patriarchal practices that oppress women.

AP

Iraqi women at Baghdad protest against U.S. war threats in January.

The history of the Near East shows over and over again the bankruptcy of reform schemes, of deals with the imperialists, of relying on the so-called "progressive" Arab nationalist bourgeoisie to break the chains of imperialism. The idea that the working class and the oppressed can move forward by pressuring the rulers to make reforms, or by joining with them in administering their state, has led to one bloody defeat after another. The imperialists and bourgeois nationalists are utterly hostile to women's emancipation, which can only be achieved through a thoroughgoing socialist revolution that shatters capitalist property relations and all associated social institutions.

Getty

Development of oil industry in Iraq gave rise to powerful proletariat.

The war on Iraq is the shape of the "New World Order" emerging from the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. That counterrevolution, which restored the capitalist profit system, was a huge defeat for the world's working class that has defined the past period. In 1917 the October Revolution, the world's first and to date only victorious workers revolution, marked the seizure of power by the working class. It was a beacon of hope for the millions of oppressed and exploited.

Upon coming to power as the leadership of the working class, the Bolsheviks proclaimed the goal of the full political and social participation of women. Insofar as they were able, the Bolsheviks instituted concrete measures to make this possible, such as day-care centers and cafeterias. Activists in the Bolsheviks' women's bureau donned the veil to work among the oppressed women of the Muslim East in Soviet Central Asia.

Despite its Stalinist degeneration beginning in 1924, the Soviet Union represented the industrial and military powerhouse for every state that overthrew capitalist rule, from Vietnam to Cuba. Today, without Soviet military might to stay its hand, U.S. imperialism is expanding its military presence on every continent.

What force can act against this lone superpower? We need class struggle in the imperialist centers. Every strike, every labor mobilization against the war, every mass protest against attacks on workers and minorities, every struggle against domestic repression puts a dent in the imperialists' war drive. To put an end to imperialist war once and for all, the capitalist system that breeds war must be swept away through a series of workers revolutions. We must establish a planned socialist economy on a world scale in which the great wealth and technology of the imperialist centers can be deployed to wipe out the poverty of the Third World.

Women and Religion

In Iraq, many women, especially in the rural areas, live under the hideous oppression of a backward, tradition-bound society. They are subjected to tribal practices of forced and arranged marriages, polygamy, the "bride price" where women and girls are bought and sold, and the head-to-toe black *abaya*, the Iraqi form of *hijab*, or veil. But Iraq is not Afghanistan. Side by side with these ancient "customs" is a modern oil industry and a powerful working class with a history of revolutionary struggle. And not coincidentally, in the last 30 years many women in the cities have gained an education, held professional jobs and benefited from what used to be the Near East's best medical system.

What accounts for the higher status of women in Iraq compared to most other countries of the Near East? Is it because Islam has less of a hold over the population? In fact, liberals and nationalists often describe Iraq as a secular state. Well, that is a misleading way to pose the question. In any society, the relationship between the classes is the starting point for understanding what is happening there. We Marxists see the institution of the family as the main source of women's oppression in class society, and we understand that the family as an institution functions according to the needs of the ruling class in any given society.

Institutionalized religion plays a crucial role in reinforcing this oppression, but it is not its origin. Islam is no different from Christianity or any other religion—they all reinforce the family, authority and the particular sexual and moral codes of their respective societies. Certainly Islam has no corner on savagery

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 803 9 May 2003

U.S. Troops Out of Iraq, Near East Now!

U.S. Imperialism Hands Off the World!

We print below, slightly edited, a presentation by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour at an SL/Spartacus Youth Club public educational in Chicago on April 27.

A couple of weeks ago, thousands of people gathered in the center of the northern Iraqi city of Mosul to protest the U.S. occupation of their country. One of Washington's Iraqi stooges tried to address the crowd, telling them to welcome the Americans as liberators. When some people started throwing stones at him, the Marines opened fire, killing at least ten and wounding many more. This scene foreshadows things to come in Iraq over the next months.

AP

What has already happened there was not so much a war as a one-sided slaughter. Untold thousands of Iraqis, civilians as well as soldiers were killed mainly through American air strikes, against which that country had no defense whatsoever. Some Iraqi forces fought the U.S. invaders with great heroism and a lot harder than the Pentagon strategists had expected and planned for.

But the courage and determination of these Iraqi soldiers were of course no match for the overpowering military technological capacity of the U.S. The Pentagon budget for this war alone was twice the entire annual national output of Iraq. Moreover, the Iraqi armed forces were massively reduced, weakened and degraded since the 1991 Gulf War with the U.S., by 12 years of imperialist economic sanctions carried out under the authority of the UN. The U.S. war against the Iraqi armed forces is now over. But the U.S. war against the Iraqi people continues in the form of a colonial occupation.

The occupation is going to be much more difficult and very possibly much more deadly for the U.S. forces than the invasion was. To begin with, in order to get Saddam Hussein, the Americans deliberately manipulated the country's murderous ethnic and religious conflicts, pitting Kurds against Arabs, Shi'ite against Sunni Muslims. One of the prominent Iraqi oppositionists who is supporting the U.S. takeover and is slated for a role in the new government is Adnan Pachachi, who once served as the country's foreign minister. And this guy is very worried about the outcome of the occupation. He says, "It is not in the interest of the U.S. to prolong its military presence." Tell that to Bush. The soldiers will be at greater risk as time goes on.

The Bush gang, supported by Congressional Democrats, is already threatening Syria, accusing the Assad regime in Damascus of giving aid and comfort to Saddam Hussein as well as other sundry crimes. At the same time, the main U.S. ally in the Near East, Zionist Israel, is celebrating the American victory in Iraq by escalating its own one-sided war against the Palestinian Arab people under its military occupation. Israeli leaders think that the U.S. takeover of Iraq has radically and fundamentally changed the balance of forces in the region in their favor. And that means there's a greater danger that they will move toward the expulsion of the Palestinians from the Occupied Territories and the accompanying massacres.

AP

Falluja, April 30: U.S. occupation troops open fire on Iraqis protesting massacre of anti-American demonstrators earlier in the week.

In a statement issued by the Spartacist League at the outbreak of the war (see "Defend Iraq Against U.S./British Attack!", *WV* No. 800, 28 March), we wrote, "It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe."

Given the overwhelming U.S. military superiority, and also the widely and very justly hated nature of the Saddam Hussein regime, we emphasized that the defense of Iraq was crucially dependent upon class struggle internationally, especially in the United States itself, against the Pentagon war machine. We pointed to Italy, where transport workers and antiwar militants successfully blocked the shipment of weapons to U.S. NATO bases. Now, likewise, opposition to the U.S. colonial occupation of Iraq and also defense of the Palestinians against Israeli terror demands class struggle against the capitalist rulers, especially here.

Democrats: Party of Imperialism and War

I assume that all of you have been involved in the antiwar protests. So have we, mainly in the form of revolutionary contingents. However, the large demonstrations were organized on the basis of so-called broad antiwar coalitions: ANSWER, Not In Our Name, United for Peace and Justice. The main organizing force and political direction of these coalitions were provided by leftist groups which claimed to be anti-imperialist, revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist, whatever—like the Workers World Party, International Socialist Organization (ISO), Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). Nonetheless, these coalitions embrace and were designed to embrace liberal Democratic Party politicians and pro-Democratic Party liberal celebrities, intellectuals, notables. The big-name speakers at the big protests leading up to the war were Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, black California Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Hollywood celebrities like Martin Sheen, Susan Sarandon, Danny Glover, well-known supporters of the

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On the LRP and Arab Nationalism

8 February 2003

Comrades,

Precisely because the Workers Vanguard is usually very careful in its historical analysis, I would like to point out the following minor, but not insignificant, mistake: In its January 31, 2003 edition, WV gives as the source of a quote from Karl Liebknecht "Die Röte Fahne." It should be "Rote Fahne," with a simple "o" rather than an umlaut.

On the other hand, your article "LRP: Apologists for Arab Nationalism" in the same edition was the most intelligent piece I've read on the subject in a long time. My wife, who is not a Marxist but who is an Israeli Jew, said: "That's my position!" Good work.

In solidarity,
Bernhard Rohrbacher

10 February 2003

To Workers' Vanguard:

I feel compelled to respond to your polemic, "LRP: Apologists for Arab Nationalism." I won't address the LRP's position since I haven't read it. However, the trumpeting revisionism of the SL comes through loud and clear.

Every time the SL wants to justify its imperialist chauvinist appetite, out comes the so-called "theory" of interpenetrated peoples. Whether it is to justify the bigotry of northern Europeans towards Mediterranean immigrants (as was done in the first Workers' Vanguard article on this theory), or capitulating to the vicious prejudices of Zionism, this approach is the enemy of Bolshevik internationalism and working class unity.

When Lenin defended the right of self-determination for oppressed nationalities, he did so with the aim of smashing the shackles that keep oppressed workers chained to their own ruling class because of their distrust of workers from the oppressor nation. To extend this strategy to an oppressor nation could only be seen by the oppressed as an attempt to maintain the status quo. That is, it would put up an obstacle towards united working class struggle. It would turn Lenin on his head.

That is exactly what the SL does. Where did Lenin ever support the right for self-determination for *all* nations, oppressed and oppressor alike? You will not be able to find a single example comrades because such a notion is completely contrary to Lenin's method.

Yet the SL insist in their defense of a "socialist" two state solution as though the actual imperialist two state solution, which has resulted in horrific oppression for the Palestinians, has no bearing on the course of revolutionary development. Instead of recognizing the inevitable national character of the Palestinians' struggle, the SL frets out of fear over "reversing the terms of oppression" when it comes to implementing a Leninist perspective. That is, fighting for a united democratic secular Palestine as a transitional demand that can only be achieved through social revolution.

Such an overarching concern regarding so-called "reverse racism" is typical of those who have not broken from the social pressures that divide our class. Unity will not be achieved by wringing our hands over the possibility of the oppressed nationality becoming the oppressor. Rather, unity can only be achieved by whole-heartedly fighting for the liberation of the oppressed through socialist working class revolution. Workers of an oppressed nationality are under no obligation to wait for their counterparts of the oppressor nationality to catch up with them. Rather, the advancement of the oppressed struggles can show the way to those class brothers and sisters who are lagging behind.

Of course the reactionary leadership of the Palestinians, with their suicide bombings that strengthen the hand of Sharon, creates a huge obstacle. However, as terrible as the suicide bombings that victimize Jewish workers are, they don't hold a candle to the systematic genocidal campaign of the U.S. backed Zionist state against the Palestinians.

Even with the lack of a revolutionary leadership, this truth combined with the Jewish workers' increasing exploitation, is already producing cracks in the Zionist consciousness of Israelis that indicate revolutionary potential. For instance, in the last elections the Israeli Russian Slavic Union threw its support behind HADASH, a predominantly Palestinian organization associated with the CP. They wrote: "We, the Russians were brought here as cheap labour force and cannon meat in order to displace and fight the native Palestinians. But we have no truck with this dispute. Let us join forces with the Palestinians against racism and poverty, for equality and democracy."

The SL are dead wrong in not supporting the creation of a workers' Palestine on top of the ruins of Israel. You end up perpetuating the same racist fear campaign against the Palestinians as the fascistic Zionists. Bolshevik-Leninists know better. Trotsky wrote in "The Agrarian and National Questions. Remarks on the Draft Theses of The Workers party of South Africa" [published in Trotsky *Writings, 1934-35* under the title "On the South African Theses"]:

> "A victorious revolution is unthinkable without the awakening of the native masses; in its turn it will give them what they are so lacking today, confidence in their strength, a heightened personal consciousness, a cultural growth. Under these conditions the South African Republic will emerge first of all as a "black" Republic; this does not exclude, of course, either full equality for whites or brotherly relations between the two races (which depends mainly upon the conduct of the whites). But it is entirely obvious that the predominant majority of the population, liberated from slavish dependence, will put a certain imprint on the State.
>
> "Insofar as a victorious revolution will radically change not only the relation between classes, but also between races, and will assure to the blacks that place in the State which corresponds to their numbers, so far will the *Social* Revolution in South Africa also have a ***national*** character. We have not the slightest reason to close our eyes to this side of the question or diminish its significance. On the contrary the proletarian party should in words and in deeds openly and boldly take the solution of the national (racial) problem in its hands."

The smashing of Israel through a workers' revolution will also have a national character. Considering that the great majority of workers who call the area their home are Palestinian, it will have a Palestinian character. Jewish workers in the region have more to gain by fighting for this than in demanding their own sliver of a sliver of a state.

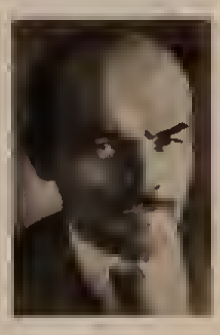
Supporting the right of Jewish self-determination in the Middle East under today's concrete conditions plays into the hands of the Arab nationalists and gives credence to the Zionists' claim that Jews constitute a nationality rather than a religious caste. It capitulates to imperialist chauvinism by holding back the demands of the Palestinians out of fear of offending those most susceptible to U.S./Zionist promoted racism. Rather than building workers' unity in the Middle East, it gags the most powerful motor force to achieve this, the struggle for Palestinian liberation.

Comradely,
Mark Ness
Workers' Action

***WV* Replies:**

Mark Ness of Workers Action (which Ness informed us is a small, U.S.-based group with as yet no publications) is manifestly unserious: he has bothered neither to address the arguments we raised in our polemic against the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) nor even to read the LRP article against

TROTSKY



LENIN

The Russian Question and the Class Line

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, homeland of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, was a historic defeat for working people and the oppressed around the world. As American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon stressed in a 1939 speech, those who reneged on defense of the gains of that first workers revolution thereby demonstrated their acceptance of the imperialist order. Cannon's speech was directed against the Burnham-Shachtman opposition, whose capitulation to petty-bourgeois anti-Sovietism provoked a fierce factional struggle within the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party.

The October revolution put socialism on the order of the day throughout the world. It revived and shaped and developed the revolutionary labor movement of the world out of the bloody chaos of the war. The Russian revolution showed in practice, by example, how the workers' revolution is to be made. It revealed in life the role of the party. It showed in life what kind of a party the workers must have. By its victory, and its reorganization of the social system, the Russian revolution has proved for all time the superiority of nationalized property and planned economy over capitalist private property, and planless competition and anarchy in production.

The question of the Russian revolution—and the Soviet state which is its creation—has drawn a sharp dividing line through the labor movement of all countries for 22 years. The attitude taken toward the Soviet Union throughout all these years has been the decisive criterion separating the genuine revolutionary tendency from all shades and degrees of waverers, backsliders and capitulators to the pressure of the bourgeois world—the Mensheviks, Social Democrats, Anarchists and Syndicalists, Centrists, Stalinists....

Conclusions on the Russian question lead directly to positions on such issues as war and revolution, defense and defeatism. Such issues, by their very nature, admit no unclarity, no compromise, because it is a matter of taking sides! One must be on one side or another in war and revolution.

—James P. Cannon, "Speech on the Russian Question" (October 1939),
Struggle for a Proletarian Party (1943)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 803 **9 May 2003**

DEBATE

Spartacist League vs. League for the Revolutionary Party

"The Fight Against Imperialist War: Which Way Forward?"

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EPA

Getty

Left: Palestinians expelled from their homes in Halfa, 1948. Right: Zionist tanks wreak death and destruction in Occupied Territories, 2003.

which we polemicized. As we noted in "LRP: Apologists for Arab Nationalism" (*WV* No. 796, 31 January). "Any socialist worth his salt solidarizes with the Palestinians who defend themselves against the murderous Zionist occupation forces in Gaza and the West Bank." But vicarious cheerleading for the Palestinian national struggle to the last drop of Palestinian blood in the face of the overwhelmingly more powerful Zionist state is the trademark of a cynical adaptation to Arab nationalism.

The LRP reaffirms its advocacy of national war as against internationalist class struggle in an attempted rejoinder to our article in the latest *Proletarian Revolution* (Spring 2003). Thus it upholds its call for the Arab bourgeois states—enforcers of the exploitation and oppression of workers, women and religious and national minorities, not least the Kurds of Iraq and Syria and, in the case of Jordan and Lebanon, the Palestinians—to provide "arms for the Palestinians"! The current article also upholds the LRP's longstanding position in support of the Arab

Sebastian Scheiner

Reuters

April 30: Prime Minister Sharon and Finance Minister Netanyahu at Knesset budget session at outbreak of massive public employees strike. Deserted Ben-Gurion airport on second day of strike.

rulers in the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967. Following the 1973 war, the LRP's predecessor, the Revolutionary Socialist League, declared: "We attack the Arab rulers for not fighting Israel in a revolutionary manner, for conservatism, for timidity, for capitulating to imperialism, for *merely* seeking a better deal with Israel rather than thoroughly smashing Israel" (*Torch*, February 1974). These "socialists" side with the reactionary Arab bourgeoisies against the reactionary Israeli bourgeoisie.

In the 1948, '67 and '73 wars, Marxists had a position of revolutionary defeatism on both sides—having no reason to choose between the equally reactionary sides involved—calling to turn the national war into a class war. In the 1956 war, Marxists had a revolutionary defensist position on the side of Egypt because the Israeli attack on the country was in concert with and subordinated to the decisive military intervention of French and British imperialism.

For his part, Ness embraces the Arab nationalist call for a "united democratic secular Palestine," tacking on the phrase "as a transitional demand that can only be achieved through social revolution." This begs the question of how such a social revolution is going to be achieved. As we stressed in our article:

> "If the Zionist citadel is not cracked from within through workers revolution, all talk of national justice is simply empty rhetoric that does nothing to advance the cause of the Palestinians. But there is no way the Hebrew workers will be won to the need for common class struggle against the Israeli capitalist rulers if their own right to a national existence is threatened."

Ness sneers, "Where did Lenin ever support the right for self-determination for *all* nations, oppressed and oppressor alike?" In "On the Question of National Policy" (1914), Lenin wrote: "Wherever we see *compulsory* ties between nations we, while by no means insisting that every nation must secede, do *absolutely* and emphatically insist on the *right* of every [!] nation to political self-determination, that is, to secession." He added, "True democracy, headed by the working class, holds aloft the banner of complete equality of nations and of unity of the workers of all nations in their class struggle."

This theme was repeated in *all* Lenin's writings on the national question, and in the interest of Marxist sanitation we will cite a handful. In "Critical Remarks on the National Question" (1913), Lenin stressed: "It is the Marxist's *bounden* duty to stand for the most resolute and consistent democratism on all aspects of the national question. This task is largely a negative one. But this is the limit the proletariat can go to in supporting nationalism, for beyond that begins the 'positive' activity of the *bourgeoisie* striving to *fortify* nationalism." Again in his 1914 pamphlet *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, he insisted: "We fight against the privileges and violence of the oppressor nation, and do not in any way condone strivings for privileges on the part of the oppressed nation."

The notion that "progressive" (oppressed) nations have the right to exist and "reactionary" (oppressor) nations don't is not Leninism but rather its Stalinist perversion. While Ness scoffs at the very idea of "reversal of the terms of oppression," such a possibility becomes particularly acute precisely in cases of interpenetrated peoples. Following the NATO occupation of Kosovo in 1999, the formerly oppressed ethnic Albanians began driving out the formerly dominant Serbian population. Today in northern Iraq, where the Kurdish population was terrorized for years by Sunni Arab forces, Kurdish forces are driving Sunni Arabs out of their homes and towns. Which are the good/oppressed and which the bad/oppressor people here? Ness and the LRP's logic—like that of all nationalism—is genocidal irredentism.

The absurd notion propounded by the LRP that Israel is today a "settler colonial" state is belied not least by the public sector strike that just rocked Israel, pitting 700,000 of these supposed "settler colonists" (Arab as well as Hebrew) against the Israeli capitalists and their state. Ness's quote from Trotsky on South Africa is very relevant...to South Africa. It is that understanding which informed our call for a black-centered workers government throughout the anti-apartheid struggle.

But where the Afrikaner (and English) colonizers sought to subjugate and *exploit* the black population, the vast majority, as laborers, the Zionist colonizers sought to *exclude* Palestinian Arabs with the aim of building a closed national economy relying on "Jewish labor only." And they succeeded in creating a Hebrew-speaking *nation* encompassing all classes of modern capitalist society. Moreover, since the signing of the 1993 Oslo accords, Israel's reliance on Palestinian labor is qualitatively diminished.

According to an article by Yossi Schwartz of the "Socialist Workers League of Palestine" in the February/March issue of the British *Workers Action* (which to our knowledge has no affiliation with Ness's Workers Action):

> "Due to their late appearance in history, in the epoch of the decline of capitalism, the Jewish colonists in Palestine have not been able to separate themselves from Zionism and imperialism and this has prevented them from becoming a nation....
>
> "The Palestinian people, on the other hand, constitute a people in the modern sense of the term because they have been formed in the struggle against imperialism and Zionism."

This is petty-bourgeois moralism, not Marxist materialism. To paraphrase Engels, all nations have historically been consolidated on a mountain of skulls. And, in fact, the leadership of the Palestinian nation, no less than the Zionists, sought to make common cause with the various imperialist powers to further their aims—but they lost out. Schwartz knows this. He was instrumental in shaping our understanding of the birth of the Zionist state and our revolutionary defeatist line on the 1948 war (see "On the First Arab-Israel War," *WV* No. 35, 4 January 1974).

Schwartz's moralistic preaching is particularly hypocritical given that when he exited our international party in 1994 he was trumpeting the virtues of the Great Russian chauvinist "red-brown coalition" of ex-Stalinists and outright fascists (while also upholding extrasensory perception and opposing the Big Bang theory as a violation of Marxist theory!).

To equate the proletariat of oppressor nations with the bloodthirsty capitalist ruling class of those states is the methodology of petty-bourgeois nationalists—not revolutionary Marxists. As Lenin wrote in "Critical Remarks," polemicizing against the Ukrainian nationalist "socialist" Lev Yurkevich:

> "If a Ukrainian Marxist allows himself to be swayed by his *quite legitimate and natural* hatred of the Great-Russian oppressors *to such a degree* that he transfers even a particle of this hatred, even if it be only estrangement, to the proletarian culture and proletarian cause of the Great-Russian workers, then such a Marxist will get bogged down in bourgeois nationalism. Similarly, the Great-Russian Marxists will be bogged down, not only in bourgeois, but also in Black-Hundred nationalism, if he loses sight, even for a moment, of the demand for complete equality for the Ukrainians, or of their *right* to form an independent state."

The logical outcome of the LRP's declaration that "Israelis unwilling to live in a Palestinian workers' state will have the right to leave" is fratricidal slaughter. It is reprehensible from the standpoint not only of consistent democratism but of revolutionary strategy. And it will only lead the Palestinian people into more bloody defeats. For if Israeli society is not shattered along *class* lines, then the nuclear-armed Zionist rulers are quite capable of obliterating the Palestinians and all the Arab countries.

The Hebrew proletariat must be won to defense of the national rights of the Palestinians; but this will not happen if Hebrew workers perceive Palestinian national rights coming at the expense of their own national rights. As we have stressed repeatedly, it will likely take great historic events to unlock the Zionist stranglehold over the Hebrew proletariat. But the only road to national justice for the Palestinians and all the peoples of the Near East lies in winning the working masses—Arab, Hebrew, Kurdish and other—to the program of proletarian revolution against all the murderous ruling classes of the region.■

LRP: Apologists for Arab Nationalism

Article from *WV* No. 796, 31 January 2003

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Young Spartacus

NEFAC Statement "Anarchists Against the War": *Pressure Politics in Militant Clothing*

Mark/NEFAC

Boston, March 29: NEFAC anarchist slogan equates victims with their oppressors in face of imperialist onslaught. We Marxists called to defend Iraq against U.S. attack.

A leaflet distributed on the East Coast by the Open City Anarchist Collective of the Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC), titled "Anarchists Against the War" (15 February), stands out from all other anarchist antiwar statements we have come across in that it takes a side in the U.S. war on Iraq. It states, "We hope the U.S. is defeated in its aggression." Anarchists typically call for neutrality in the face of wars between colonial or semicolonial countries and the most deadly imperialist power on the planet. For example, a principal slogan of NEFAC has been: "No war between nations, no peace between classes." The logic of this superficially radical slogan is ultimately chauvinist, damning the struggle for self-defense of oppressed nations in the same breath as they condemn pillage and rape by the imperialists.

It is the duty of revolutionaries to defend oppressed and dependent countries against imperialist attack. Easy wins for the imperialists, as the war in Iraq has been, embolden them to undertake further rampage and bloody conquest. A defeat of the U.S. would be a victory for workers of the world, not least in allowing more room for class struggle to emerge. Since the U.S. war moves against Iraq began, we emblazoned on our banners: "Defend Iraq Against Imperialist Attack!" Defense of Iraq no more means political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime than defense of protesters against a police assault means political agreement with them.

On some level, NEFAC and Open City agree that wars are inherent to the capitalist system in the age of imperialism. NEFAC's "Aims and Principles" states that war is a manifestation of imperialism, and the Open City leaflet says, "Capitalist states like the U.S. exist to wage war." So from these observations it should be elementary that to successfully oppose war it is necessary to shatter the war-driven system we live under today. Yet, despite their call for a "social revolution," Open City offers no alternative to the strategy of the reformists whose "antiwar" coalitions are consciously designed to build a platform for Democratic Party politicians! Thus, its commendable position in siding with Iraq against U.S. imperialist aggression is undermined by its pushing the same old pressure politics.

So they say, "A large movement is necessary, including a wide range of viewpoints and methods, operating in a democratic and pluralistic fashion. As anarchists, we are prepared to work in a united front of anti-war forces." But as American Trotskyist James Burnham stated in *War and the Workers* (1936):

> "To suppose, therefore, that revolutionists can work out a common 'program against war' with non-revolutionists is a fatal illusion. Any organization based upon such a program is not merely powerless to prevent war; in practice it acts to promote war, both because it serves in its own way to uphold the system that breeds war, and because it diverts the attention of its members from the real fight against war. There is only *one* program against war: the program *for* revolution—the program of the revolutionary party of the workers."

The Open City leaflet continues, "We need a movement that does not rely on or work with the Democratic Party." But behind the "broad" antiwar coalitions is the false idea that to stop war requires consummating a political bloc with representatives of the capitalist class in whose interests imperialist war is waged. So while the leaflet aptly describes the role of the "peace" Democrats as to "divert the dissent of the anti-war movement to permissible, diffuse channels that won't upset the status quo," Open City's left criticism of the Democrats is empty inasmuch as it finds no application in what it actually advocates *doing*—working in coalitions that presuppose the inviolability of capitalist class rule!

The attempt to distance the "large movement" from the Democratic Party is simply a cover for pressure politics. Pro-imperialist liberals would not join coalitions that did not cater to them. ANSWER, Not In Our Name and United for Peace and Justice court the Democrats and look to "unite" antiwar youth behind them. The coalitions as well reached out in the spirit of "unity" to those who opposed this war because they felt it was not in the best interests of the U.S., that the U.S. should save its strength for "more important" wars, like against North Korea. And Open City accepts the rationale behind a pro-imperialist "peace" movement, terming it a "united front of anti-war forces."

It was with pious declarations about the sanctity of a "united front" of anti-fascist forces "including a wide range of viewpoints and methods" that anarchists became ministers of the *bourgeois state* during the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s, their opposition to "all states" notwithstanding. Only months earlier in 1936, victorious anarchist-led workers militias in Catalonia were betrayed when the anarchists *renounced the consolidation of a workers state*, voluntarily leaving a severely crippled bourgeoisie in power. Thus the anarchists—in virtually the only country in the world where they ever had a mass proletarian following—along with all the other reformists, like the Stalinist Communist Party, prevented the insurgent working class from toppling the Republican government and taking state power. This betrayal led to Franco's victory and decades of murderous reaction in Spain and robbed the proletariat throughout Europe of a powerful impetus in their own revolutionary struggles. The Spanish Trotskyists fought for the mobilization of the proletariat *independent* of the class enemy, the starting point in the struggle for socialist revolution.

For a Revolutionary Vanguard Party!

What is necessary is not more "unity" with those who defend, and indeed thirst to run, the capitalist system. The first step toward revolutionary consciousness is to break ruthlessly from the supporters of the rule of capital. Revolutionary-minded youth and workers need to be won away from leftists who peddle an alliance with the class enemy. But to win them requires they be won to something—a revolutionary program and party. The anarchist infatuation with leaderless movements misses the essential point: there will *always* be leadership, and if it is not revolutionary it will be counterrevolutionary.

Nowhere has a spontaneous, atomized movement overturned an old social order. The ruling class is organized, and it has a state to protect its interests. It is conscious of its class aims. In order to smash capitalism, the workers must be equally organized and conscious of their class interests: the ending of capitalism and the establishment of socialism.

The leaflet contends, "Unions are relatively weak and top-heavy with bureaucrats. But a real class struggle program would shake up the capitalists and their state." Too true. But who is to fight for this "class struggle program"? Someone must or else the pro-Democratic Party union misleadership will remain at their posts. Revolutionaries must intervene into the unions to fight against the illusions that workers have in the Democrats. Marxists seek to forge a class-struggle leadership of the unions that champions the cause of the oppressed and mobilizes the social power of the proletariat in struggle against the bosses and their system.

Fighting Imperialist War: Liberal Reformism or Class Struggle?

Open City proposes a two-stage program: for now pressure the capitalists, later revolution in the indefinite future. They say, "To limit their wars, we must put pressure on these states [like the U.S.]. To end their wars, we must end all states." It is a common illusion that the "excesses" of capitalism can be curtailed by exerting enough pressure through appeals to the "good" conscience of the capitalists. But it is not a question of greed, lack of morals or other personal failures of a handful of capitalists.

The capitalist produces for profit by exploiting labor or is no longer in business. Imperialism is the stage of capitalism marked by competition among the advanced industrial nations for control of markets, raw materials and spheres of exploitation in pursuit of such profits. This control over and subjugation of other parts of the world is enforced militarily in the final analysis. Likewise, the competition to exploit and plunder the world leads sooner or later to wars between the imperialist ruling classes, as was demonstrated in two bloody world wars.

It should be clear to all that the broad antiwar coalitions that mobilized millions across the world in protest did *nothing* to stop or even "limit" the desires and the ability of the world's bloodiest imperialist power to devastate Iraq. It is a good thing that millions took to the streets. But it is a crime that their just anger over the attack on Iraq was channeled into avenues safe for the bourgeoisie. The Spartacist

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AK Press

Historia 16

Barcelona, July 1936: Workers militias were victorious on battlefield. Shortly after, anarchist leaders (above) joined capitalist coalition government, sabotaging proletarian revolution.

U.S. Imperialism...

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liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

Not only did we not participate in these coalitions, but we are in principle opposed to building an antiwar movement with the liberal representatives of American capitalism and imperialism. To begin with, as we predicted, once the war started the Democratic Party lined up staunchly behind Bush in the name of "supporting our troops in Iraq." The Senate unanimously endorsed Bush's "firm leadership and decisive action in the conduct of military operations in Iraq." A similar resolution was passed with an overwhelming bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives, with only a handful of Democrats voting against or abstaining. And even most of them declared their support to "our troops," that is, the imperialist invasion force killing thousands of Iraqis and laying waste to their country.

Nonetheless, the leftist organizers of the antiwar coalitions have continued to appeal to the Democrats. If you go to the ANSWER Web site, and ANSWER is basically run by Workers World, you can find this petition: "Vote to impeach Bush" for illegally carrying out the war against Iraq. Okay, you guys vote to impeach Bush, what then? "Votes cast in this campaign will be hand delivered to the Chair of the House Judiciary Committee," who is a Republican, "and to the ranking Democrat on the Committee." By George, that will do it! That will get rid of Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld and that gang? It's fun to make fun of the imbecilities of groups like Workers World, but of course the Iraq war is not a laughing matter.

For those of you who have first become involved in leftist politics in opposition to that war, it's important to understand that the Democratic Party, including its liberal wing, has permitted in the past, is supporting in the present, and will commit in the future atrocities every bit as great, if not greater, than what Bush is now doing in Iraq. The U.S. has been waging a one-sided war against Iraq for 12 years. This is not new. Beginning under Bush Sr., the killing economic sanctions and periodic terror bombing were continued under his Democratic successor, Bill Clinton. In the eight years of the Clinton administration, an estimated one and a half million Iraqis died of starvation, malnutrition and disease as a result. A third of them were children. In 1996, Clinton's Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, was interviewed by the TV journalist Lesley Stahl, on *60 Minutes*, who asked her, "More than 500,000 Iraqi children are already dead as a direct result of the UN sanctions. Do you think the price is worth paying?" Albright replied, "It is a difficult question. But, yes, we think the price is worth it."

This was not the only such atrocity carried out by the Clinton administration. There was also the 1999 U.S./NATO air war against Serbia. This was carried out in the name of liberating—sound familiar?—the Albanians of Kosovo from the oppressive rule of Serbian nationalist strongman, Slobodan Milosevic. For more than two months, U.S. warplanes systematically demolished the economic infrastructure of this small Balkan country in southeastern Europe. Toxic chemicals were released into the air and waterways by the bombing of petrochemical plants and the Pentagon's use of shells made of depleted uranium, a radioactive waste product. Liberal Democrats did not merely support war against Serbia, they were the ones who campaigned for it. It was liberal intellectuals and activists and some so-called leftists, not right-wing Republicans, who were the main anti-Serb war hawks. For example, *In These Times*, a journal of left-liberal opinion, ran an article on the Balkans titled, "Give War a Chance." The protests in the U.S. against the U.S./NATO air war against Serbia were tiny, minuscule, a few hundred people.

Underlying the atrocities committed by Democratic presidents from the A-bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by Harry Truman in the Second World War to the war against Serbia conducted by Clinton is a basic truth. All political parties which support the capitalist system, the Democrats in the U.S., the Social Democrats and Greens in West Europe, support war as a means of defending and advancing the interests of the financiers and industrialists whom they serve. They may oppose a particular war at a particular time, but they support imperialist militarism in general.

Reuters

AP

U.S. colonial overseer Jay Garner flanked by Kurdish bourgeois-nationalist leaders Jalal Talabani (left) and Massoud Barzani, April 22. Arab woman weeps in front of her Kirkuk home seized by Kurds.

Luke Frazza

Private Eye

U.S. war chief Rumsfeld autographs road sign in Baghdad. Right: British satirical magazine *Private Eye* spoofs American occupation of Iraq.

For Class War Against Imperialist War!

Since we oppose building an antiwar movement with the representatives of the capitalist class, does that mean that we only do our own thing? That we oppose working with any group that doesn't share our basic opposition to American imperialism? No, not at all. We have engaged and will engage in common actions, concrete actions against American imperialist militarism. We call these united-front actions with groups that are quite distant from our revolutionary Marxist outlook and program. For example, a few weeks ago in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Spartacus Youth Club initiated and organized a protest against ROTC, the officer training program, at the University of California in Berkeley. And participating in this were a group of Direct Action anarchists and kindred radical spirits. Significantly, the campus groups of the ISO and RCP refused to endorse the anti-ROTC protest.

The key to combatting American imperialist militarism, however, is working-class struggle. Therefore our supporters in the trade unions have campaigned for the unions to demand the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and the rest of the Near East. This strategy underscores one of our main differences with the Direct Action anarchists, who are generally viewed and view themselves as the militant left wing of the anti-war movement.

When the bombs started falling on Baghdad, we, too, wanted the disruption of business as usual—New York, San Francisco and other major U.S. cities. But the way to do that was not for a few thousand radical leftists to block traffic intersections in the downtown business district. Consider instead the impact of a walkout by transit workers between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. protesting the U.S. military adventure in Iraq. That is not a fantastical notion, something that could never happen in a million years. In Chicago, New York, a number of other cities, transit workers are heavily black. A majority of black working people opposed the war and they really hate Bush.

But to translate opposition to the war and, now, to the occupation of Iraq among the working class and oppressed minorities into effective labor action, that requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO and the liberal wing of the Democratic Party to which it's closely tied. Because, you see, the role of the Jesse Jacksons, the Dennis Kucinichs, the Barbara Lees, is to contain such opposition within the framework of respectable protest and capitalist electoral politics. It's precisely those liberal Democrats who opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq, at least initially, and their leftist camp followers like the ISO and Workers World who are the main political obstacles to working-class struggle against American imperialist militarism.

U.S. Imperialism Threatens the World

So what is the war against Iraq really all about? Standard answer on the left, "It's about oil." "No blood for oil" is one of the main slogans in the protests here, in Europe and elsewhere. It's certainly true that ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco, the other members of the American and British oil cartel want to take over Iraq's oil fields. Iraq has the second-largest petroleum reserves in the world after Saudi Arabia. But the U.S. didn't have to expend Iraqi blood to get the oil. Money would have done just as well. But the American ruling class wanted Iraqi blood just as much as it wanted Iraqi oil. Why? With the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution a little over a decade ago, the American rulers declared their state to be the world's only superpower. And they're determined to keep it that way.

Last September, the White House issued a document called "The National Security Strategy of the United States," which states, "It is time to reaffirm the essential role of American military strength," in order to "dissuade future military competition." We must be "strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing or equaling the power of the United States." So, when the authors of this document talk about future military competitors, potential adversaries capable of achieving military parity with the U.S., what countries do they have in mind? It ain't Iraq and North Korea. What about China? China is the most populous country in the world and it has a small nuclear arsenal and some long-range missiles. But China is a relatively economically backward country. Two-thirds of the population live in the countryside.

When the strategists of American imperialism talk about future potential military competitors, they mean the other

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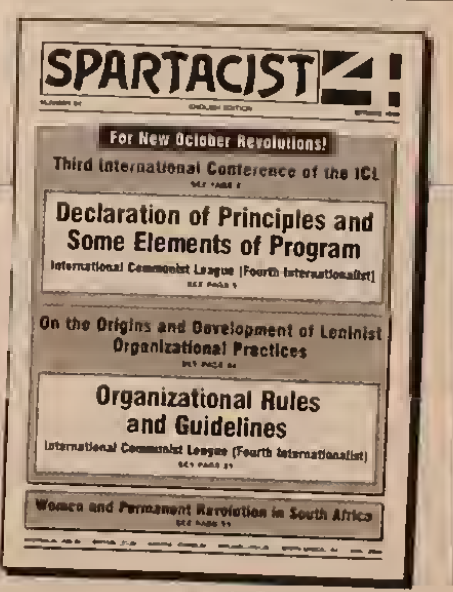

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U.S. Imperialism...

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major capitalist countries. There's Japan. The Japanese economy has been in the doldrums for a decade or more, but it still is the second-largest economy in the world. In the last war between imperialist states, the U.S. fought Japan, mainly over which country would subjugate and exploit China. There's Germany, the strongest economic state in Europe. The U.S. fought Germany in both the first and second world wars. And then there's Russia. Capitalist counterrevolution has led to a catastrophic economic and social decline unprecedented in any advanced industrialized country. Nonetheless, Russia's new capitalist rulers, who have their own imperialist ambitions, inherited from the Soviet Union a powerful nuclear arsenal and strong conventional armed forces. An alliance between Germany's economic and technological resources and Russia's military potential would create a formidable challenge to American global dominance.

How do the U.S. rulers expect to maintain their exceptional level of military superiority? The answer can be found in a Pentagon document which came out early last year called "The Nuclear Posture Review." "U.S. military forces themselves, including nuclear forces, will now be used to dissuade adversaries from undertaking military programs and operations that could threaten U.S. interests." The official military doctrine of American imperialism now is pre-emptive war, including the use of nuclear weapons against any country deemed a potential threat to the interests of Wall Street banks and the Fortune 500 corporations.

Souza/Chicago Tribune

Kosovo city of Pec devastated in 1999 U.S./NATO war of terror against Serbia.

The Iraq war above all was a demonstration of American military power and the will to use it. The bombs and cruise missiles raining down on Baghdad were intended as a message written in Iraqi blood to the ruling circles in Paris and Berlin, Moscow and Tokyo. The real meaning of this war was clearly and succinctly stated by a student protester in South Korea: "The whole war is for strengthening U.S. power over the world."

Now, it's very significant that this young Korean leftist intellectual grasped that this was not just a war for Iraqi oil. Early this year, a senior White House official gave an interview with the *Far Eastern Economic Review* in which he summed up the administration's policy toward North Korea. "First is regime change." Sound familiar? "It need not be military but it could lead to that." Sound familiar?

Defend North Korea!

While Bush linked North Korea with Saddam Hussein's Iraq (and also Iran) as part of a so-called axis of evil, the two are fundamentally different kinds of states. Iraq is a capitalist state—a neocolonial country which was dependent upon Western imperialism. As we pointed out, the U.S. supported and armed Saddam Hussein and his political godfathers in the past. North Korea is, in conventional political parlance, a Communist country, what we Trotskyists call a bureaucratically deformed workers state; the others today are China, Vietnam and Cuba. These are countries in which the capitalist system has been overthrown and replaced by a collectivized economy. But the governing apparatuses of these countries are in the hands of a nationalistic, parasitic bureaucracy which opposes and betrays the prospect for world socialist revolution and in so doing undermines and weakens the workers states that they misrule.

The head of North Korea, Kim Jong Il, is officially known as the "Dear Leader." He inherited the job, literally, from his father, Kim Il Sung, who is known as the "Great Leader." Kim and son have promoted a semi-mystical Korean nationalism. For example, Kim Jong Il claims that he was born on a mountain top in northern Korea that is the site of a mythic ancient Korean kingdom. The actual circumstances of his birth are far more honorable from our standpoint. He was born somewhere along the border between Russia and China during the Second World War, when his father was leading a force of Korean guerrillas who were fighting, along with the Chinese Communist guerrilla forces, the Japanese imperialists, who were then the colonial rulers of Korea. But of course the hostility of the American imperialists toward North Korea has nothing to do with the somewhat bizarre nature of its ruling Stalinist dynasty. They view North Korea as a defiant Communist country, one which, moreover, has proclaimed the right to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself. And now says it has a few of these. Good. We hope it does.

Xinhua

Chinese war heroes hailed by North Koreans celebrating1953 cease-fire ending Korean War. Chinese forces were critical in defeating U.S. attempt to overrun North Korean deformed workers state.

The American ruling class has a special hatred for North Korea because its very existence is a reminder of the humiliating military setback, if not the outright defeat, the U.S. suffered in the Korean War of 1950-53. U.S. forces invaded Korea—incidentally under a UN mandate—and they were on the verge of victory. The American commander, Douglas MacArthur, proclaimed that the troops would be "home by Christmas." But then the Chinese People's Liberation Army intervened militarily in force and drove the Americans back.

This was the biggest battlefield defeat the U.S. had suffered up till then in the modern era. The war dragged on for another two and a half years. In strictly military/political terms, the war ended in a stalemate. The armistice agreement restored the division of Korea which had existed before the war began. North Korea remained a deformed workers state allied with China and the Soviet Union. South Korea remained a capitalist state with a U.S. puppet government. But in the U.S., at the time and later, the Korean War was widely seen as a defeat. The greatest military power on earth had been fought to a standstill by Red China and North Korea. That wasn't supposed to happen.

Malcolm X later commented on the Korean War with his usual perceptive wit. He said something like, "If you get into the ring with Joe Louis (who was the great heavyweight boxing champion of the 1930s and '40s) and the fight ends in a draw, man you've won!" Well, the American ruling class thought the Communists had won the Korean War because they hadn't lost it. Now, with the deterrent force of the Soviet Union no longer in play behind North Korea, they're looking for a rematch.

One of the reasons the U.S. invaded Iraq was precisely because it did *not* have nuclear weapons or other so-called weapons of mass destruction. As the North Korean foreign ministry quite rightly stated, "The Iraqi war shows that to allow disarming through inspection does not help avert war but rather sparks it."

There is another very different, but potentially immensely powerful weapon for the defense of North Korea against American imperialism. And that is the proletariat of South Korea, which has one of the strongest, most combative and most politically advanced working classes in the world. The U.S. military threat against North Korea takes place against the background of a rising level of popular opposition to American imperialism in South Korea. A new generation of workers and leftist intellectuals has come to the fore whose political consciousness was shaped by their own struggles against the U.S.-backed right-wing military regimes which ruled that country until the late 1980s.

For example, in 1980 there was a popular uprising in the major South Korean city of Kwangju. Hundreds of thousands of working people took to the streets, they drove out the army units and they took control of the city for five days. In order to dispatch special forces, who were stationed on the border of North Korea, to suppress the uprising, the military regime in Seoul had to first get the approval of the Americans, because the Americans exercised very tight control over the Korean armed forces. The decision to approve the sending of South Korean troops into Kwangju, where they killed some 2,000 people, was made at the very highest levels of the U.S. government under the Democratic administration of Jimmy Carter, well known for his human rights rhetoric. Probably most of you have not heard of the Kwangju uprising and massacre. But everyone in South Korea knows about it.

U.S. Troops Out of Korea!

The U.S. buildup to the invasion of Iraq coincided with mass protests in South Korea against the U.S. military presence there. These were touched off last summer when American soldiers driving an armored personnel carrier killed two Korean schoolgirls in a training exercise. And then they escalated when a U.S. military court acquitted the soldiers involved. But this was not just a momentary upsurge of popular outrage. Opinion polls show that a substantial majority of South Koreans, especially in the younger generation, now want to get rid of the American military presence so they can reunite with the North. Many of the protesters openly state that the North has the right to defend itself, including with the development of nuclear weapons, against the U.S. So if the U.S. bombs nuclear facilities in North Korea as they are threatening to do, this could well detonate a social explosion in South Korea.

Now at the same time, we recognize that the increasing popular opposition to the U.S. military presence and the pro-North sentiment represents to a large extent nationalist attitudes. Nationalist attitudes can be exploited and to a degree have been exploited by the big South Korean capitalists, the so-called *chaebol*. Hyundai et al. have their own strategy for reunifying Korea on a capitalist basis. They call it the "Sunshine Policy." It aims to economically subvert North Korea, corrupt its officials and eventually buy out the Stalinist ruling clique in

ICL Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

The Declaration of Principles of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a concrete expression of our purpose: to build national sections of a democratic-centralist international which can lead the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution. This important document, which was adopted at the Third International Conference of the ICL in early 1998, was published in the four language editions of *Spartacist* and additionally in nine other languages.

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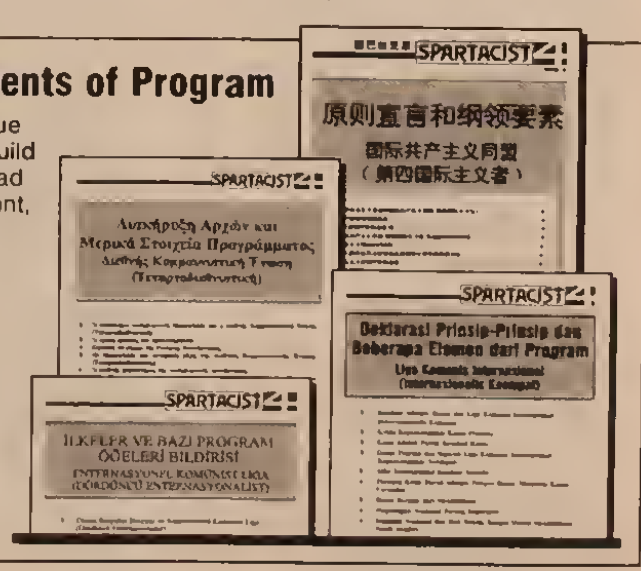

Pyongyang. We oppose the "Sunshine Policy" and we counterpose to it the revolutionary reunification of Korea, that is, through proletarian socialist revolution in South Korea and political revolution in the North.

The future of Korea, like its past, will not be determined solely by developments in that East Asian peninsula. Across the northern border of Korea is China, by far the largest and most powerful of the remaining states in which capitalism has been overthrown. Having succeeded in their decades-long goal of destroying the Soviet Union, the American imperialists view the continued existence of the People's Republic of China as a very large piece of unfinished business. Their goal: to reverse the 1949 Chinese Revolution in order to subjugate and exploit China, to turn China into a gigantic sweatshop. Their means: to combine increased military pressure from without with increasing capitalist penetration internally facilitated by the so-called market reforms of the venal Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy. Now, unlike North Korea, China has a small but effective nuclear arsenal which affords it a certain degree of protection against an immediate American military attack. So it's more likely that the decisive battles determining the fate of China will be fought internally, between the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in and around the bureaucracy on the one side and the workers and rural toilers on the other.

Key to a victory to our side is the building of a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead what we call a proletarian political revolution, that is, the ouster of the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy and its replacement by a government representing the genuine interests of the workers and toilers. Such a government would expropriate the new capitalist enterprises, foreign and domestic. It would reintroduce centralized planning and management and would appeal with enormous political and moral authority to the workers and oppressed masses throughout East Asia, especially and including the proletariat of Japan, which is the industrial powerhouse of the region.

Imperialist Rivalries Sharpen

All of the major events and developments in the world today—the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq, the U.S. military threats against North Korea, the looming crisis in China, the sharp division over the Iraq war between the U.S. and Britain on the one side and France, Germany and Russia on the other—are decisively conditioned by the destruction of the Soviet Union. The USSR emerged from the Second World War in 1945, having defeated Nazi Germany, as a military and industrial power second only to the United States. And during the next four and a half decades, the era of the Cold War, the Soviet Union acted as a partial counterweight to American military and political global dominance.

Let's look again at the Korean War in that regard. Since the U.S. could not defeat the Chinese and North Korean forces on the ground, the American commander MacArthur wanted to go nuclear. Now MacArthur was a right-wing megalomaniac. But the supposedly more rational and moderate American leaders, like the liberal Democratic president Harry Truman, also considered using nuclear weapons. Truman secretly had the components to assemble atomic bombs placed on an aircraft carrier stationed off the Korean coast.

The American ruling class considered using nuclear weapons against China and North Korea and they planned how to use them. But in the end they didn't actually use them, mainly for fear that this would lead to an all-out war with the Soviet Union, which had its own nuclear arsenal. Likewise, a decade later the deterrent force of the Soviet Union was a major factor which prevented the U.S. from reducing North Vietnam to irradiated rubble, although they bombed the hell out of it as they had earlier done to North Korea. At the same time, the common hostility toward the Soviet Union tempered the economic conflicts of interest between the major capitalist states, those states which in the first part of the 20th century had fought two wars against one another.

In the late 1940s and early '50s, Britain, France, West Germany, Japan formed military alliances with and led by the U.S. against the Soviet Union and its allies. But since the demise of the Soviet Union, the economic conflicts of interest between the capitalists of these states have necessarily and increasingly come to the fore. Thus the period preceding the U.S. invasion of Iraq saw escalating trade disputes between the U.S. on the one side and the European Union led by Germany and France on the other. Capitalists in Europe and some other countries, such as Japan, South Korea, Brazil, were especially incensed that Bush, to protect the beleaguered American steel industry, imposed sharply higher tariffs on U.S. steel imports, a flagrant violation of existing trade agreements.

Business Week, which is one of the more intelligent journals of American capitalism, warned, "A long heavy-handed U.S. military occupation of Iraq dominated by American companies and a go-it-alone foreign policy could further inflame anti-Americanism abroad and reshape the U.S. and global economy in unforeseen and unwanted ways." A subsequent issue noted, "U.S. companies could face boycotts and other roadblocks in global markets." *Business Week* points out that not only European but also Japanese and even Canadian companies are infuriated that the contracts that the U.S. has already granted for the "reconstruction of Iraq" have frozen them out.

Germany and France cannot now challenge the U.S. at the military level in the Near East or elsewhere in the so-called Third World. But they can retaliate against U.S. economic interests in Europe. That they can do. They can increase tariffs and other restrictions on imports from the U.S. They can exclude American companies from lucrative government contracts. They can discriminate against American corporate investment in Europe through higher taxes or restrictions on the repatriation of profits.

One of the casualties of the Iraq war is the ideology of "globalization," especially in its left-wing version. This is or was the notion that big, so-called multinational or transnational corporations now operate above the nation-state system, that Citibank and General Motors are no longer really American companies dependent upon American state power to defend and further their interests. Likewise, the Deutschebank and Siemens are seen as no longer really tied to the German state. According to the left-wing theorists of globalization, nation-states are no longer the main actors shaping the world economy. Their role has been supposedly replaced by international economic and financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization. Yeah, right. How many cruise missiles does the IMF have?

The basic point is that property rights are meaningless unless they can be enforced by state power, the core of which is, in the words of Friedrich Engels, armed bodies of men. If you don't pay your rent or you don't meet your mortgage payments, it is not the landlord or the bank officers but the police who will come and throw you and your family out of your home. The same principle operates at the international level, except that there you have a multiplicity of competing and conflicting state powers. French and Russian companies signed contracts with the Saddam Hussein regime to exploit major oil fields in Iraq. Guess what's going to happen to those contracts under the American occupation? They're going to be ripped up and the fields turned over to American companies. Likewise, Bush is telling the French and the Russians: forget about getting back the money you lent to the Baghdad regime over the years—you ain't getting it back.

So the Iraq war demonstrates that economic conflicts between the imperialist states are ultimately resolved at the military level. Shortly before the bombs started falling on Baghdad, the French ambassador to Washington commented that reading the newspapers on the two sides of the Atlantic, one would think the impending war was between the U.S. and France. But in reality, the diplomatic salvos that were exchanged over the Atlantic in the run-up to the U.S. invasion of Iraq do point to future wars between the imperialist powers and rival blocs, wars which could plunge all of humanity into a nuclear holocaust. Welcome to the post-Soviet world.

AP

Paris, March 5: Foreign ministers Ivanov of Russia, de Villepin of France and Fischer of Germany announcing intent to block UN resolution authorizing war. Today they clamor for share of spoils.

Sygma

Reiser/Bilderberg

Moscow, August 1991: Boris Yeltsin waves Russian flag on barricades of capitalist counterrevolution. Right: Moscow street market. Capitalist restoration has devastated lives in former USSR.

The Russian Question

But to understand the post-Soviet world, one first has to understand the Soviet Union: the contradictory nature of that state; its conflict with capitalist imperialism, centrally American imperialism; the factors that led to its destruction in 1991-92. The Soviet Union was born in October 1917 amid the blood and gore of the first interimperialist world war. After three years of military slaughter, Russian workers, peasants and soldiers, the latter mainly peasant youth, rose up and overthrew the tsarist autocracy, which had ruled the country for centuries. Six months later, the Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky led a workers revolution against the weak capitalist Provisional Government, a coalition between a handful of bourgeois liberals and the social democrats, the Mensheviks, who were the Russian analogue at the time of the ISO.

For the first time in history, the working class took political power on the basis of its own institutions, a government of workers and peasants soviets (soviet simply being the Russian term for council). For the first time, the capitalists and landowners were expropriated and the economic resources of society were

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U.S. Imperialism...

(continued from page 7)

reorganized and directed in the interests of the workers and other toilers.

The Bolshevik Revolution had an enormously liberating effect on all aspects of social and cultural life. Contrary to popular opinion, the first country to outlaw discrimination against homosexuals was not San Francisco—it was Soviet Russia. Russian modernist artists like Wassily Kandinski who had lived and worked in West Europe returned to Soviet Russia to participate in what they considered the building of a radically new and better society. The Bolshevik Revolution was made *in* Russia but was not made only *for* Russia. Not only the Bolshevik leaders but the mass of Russian workers saw October 1917 as the beginning of a world socialist revolution. And in fact the Bolshevik Revolution ***did*** inspire revolutionary movements and the formation of new communist parties around the world.

But in no other country was capitalism overthrown. A major reason is that in no other country was there a pre-existing revolutionary vanguard party—such as the Bolshevik Party, which Lenin had built over the years in tsarist Russia—which commanded authority among decisive sections of the working class. Soviet Russia emerged in the early 1920s economically and socially devastated by seven years of war and civil war, internationally isolated and surrounded by hostile and more powerful capitalist states. A seemingly unbridgeable gulf opened up between the liberating goals of the revolution and the grim realities of Soviet Russian life. Under these conditions, there was a tendency toward demoralization and depoliticalization among the working class. And there was a parallel tendency among the administrators and officials of the government and the ruling Communist Party, an erosion of revolutionary commitment, a loss of belief in the prospect of world socialist revolution, an increasing concern to maintain and advance one's own social position and relative material well-being.

These tendencies culminated in 1924 in what Trotsky later called a bureaucratic political counterrevolution, which was subsequently represented by and consolidated under the murderous regime of Joseph Stalin. In order to better explain Stalin's Russia in a way that could be understood by workers in the West, Trotsky compared it to a gigantic, highly bureaucratized trade union with a sellout leadership. All workers would and should defend such a union in conflicts with the capitalists and their state. At the same time, class-conscious workers should seek to oust that bureaucracy and replace it with a leadership genuinely representing their interests.

In the late 1930s, Trotsky described the contradictory nature of the Soviet Union as a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, and he projected two basic and opposite ways in which that contradiction would be resolved.

> "State ownership of the means of production, a necessary prerequisite to socialist development, opened up the possibility of rapid growth of the productive forces. But the apparatus of the workers' state underwent a complete degeneration at the same time: It was transformed from a weapon of the working class into a weapon of bureaucratic violence against the working class....
>
> "The political prognosis has an alternative character: either the bureaucracy, becoming ever more the organ of the world bourgeoisie in the workers' state, will overthrow the new forms of property and plunge the country back into capitalism; or the working class will crush the bureaucracy and open the way to socialism."

Today, we know what happened. Eventually, it was capitalist counterrevolution which came to pass. However, the USSR survived as a bureaucratically degenerated workers state for a far longer time period than Trotsky, who was assassinated by a Stalinist agent in 1940, had projected. And in doing so, the Soviet Union radically altered the course of world history, from its victory over Nazi Germany in the Second World War to the decades-long Cold War with American imperialism. The final phase of that global conflict was known as Cold War II. By the late 1970s, the American ruling class had partially recovered from its defeat in Vietnam and launched a new offensive against the USSR and its allies, increasing military, economic and political pressure.

Afghanistan and Cold War II

One of the main battlefields of Cold War II, in the literal military sense of the term, was Afghanistan. In 1978, a group of left-wing, modernizing nationalists with close ties to Moscow—these were mainly military officers and urban intellectuals, like teachers—took power in Afghanistan, which is one of the most wretchedly backward countries on earth. They tried to introduce some modest democratic and progressive social reforms, especially with regard to the hideous oppression of women under Islamic traditionalism. For example, they instituted elementary education for young girls in a country where 98 percent of women were illiterate. The U.S., under the Democratic Carter administration and continued by Reagan, moved to overthrow what it viewed as this new radical, Soviet-allied regime in Afghanistan. The CIA organized and armed Islamic fundamentalist tribesmen called the *mujahedin*. This is where the Taliban comes from. Osama bin Laden got his military training as a CIA operative fighting the Soviet forces and their left-nationalist allies in Afghanistan.

In order to prevent the U.S.-backed reactionaries from taking over Afghanistan, which shared a long border with the USSR, the Soviet regime of Leonid Brezhnev intervened militarily in force, and that was a very good thing. It was a rare, genuinely progressive action undertaken by the Kremlin leadership, which usually conciliated and sold out to American imperialism in the name of pursuing peaceful co-existence. Recognizing that, we raised at the time the slogans "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and "Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!"

The Carter administration latched onto the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan to declare Cold War II. Imperialist propaganda was now revved into high gear. The government immediately denounced Soviet expansionism and glorified the *mujahedin* cutthroats as "freedom fighters." Atrocities were fabricated concerning the Soviet forces in Afghanistan, for example, that they were using chemical weapons against peaceful Afghan villagers. One could of course expect that from Reagan and the capitalist class. But for those of you who are not familiar, almost every left group in this country echoed and supported the imperialist line on Afghanistan. The Maoist, Stalinist groups like the RCP and Progressive Labor denounced the Soviet Union as imperialist or social-imperialist, whatever that means. The ISO enthusiastically and predictably supported the CIA's *mujahedin* against the Soviet forces. One of the small anarchist groups hack then retailed the lie of the Reagan White House that Soviet warplanes were dropping poisonous chemicals on the Afghan countryside. I'm not making this up.

More generally, not only liberals but the overwhelming majority of self-described leftists in this country supported and cheered on every anti-Communist group and current in the Soviet sphere: Solidarność in Poland, right-wing nationalists and pro-Western dissidents elsewhere in East Europe and in the USSR. Uniquely, our tendency, the International Communist League, defended the Soviet Union on all the major fronts of Cold War II: Afghanistan, Poland, East Germany—officially the German Democratic Republic—and finally in the USSR itself. In the late 1980s, under the impact of the new imperialist offensive, the Soviet bureaucracy began to disintegrate and also to splinter along national lines. This happened under the new, liberal Stalinist regime of Mikhail Gorbachev.

A few years later, Gorbachev was ousted by one of his former top lieutenants, Boris Yeltsin, who then carried out the capitalist counterrevolution. But before that happened, Gorbachev unilaterally and unconditionally surrendered on all of the fronts of the Cold War. He pulled Soviet troops out of Afghanistan, thereby allowing the CIA's Islamic cutthroats, the forerunners of the Taliban, to come to power. He sold out the German Democratic Republic to the Deutschebank and the other heirs to Hitler's Third Reich. And he tacitly supported the U.S. in the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq, which up until then was significantly dependent on Soviet aid. On the eve of launching Operation Desert Slaughter against Iraq, Bush Sr. declared, "This was the beginning of a new world order, one henceforth completely dominated by the United States." Within the next two years, the Soviet Union itself had ceased to exist. The rape of Iraq today is but the latest grim consequence of that world historic defeat for the international working class and oppressed peoples.

VAAP

October Revolution led by Lenin's Bolsheviks pointed way out of imperialist slaughter of World War I. Banner at December 1917 Russian workers demonstration includes call: "Long Live Soviet Power Which Has Paved the Way for Peace Among Nations."

Karl Marx once wrote, "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past." Now today, the second part of that statement is especially in evidence, because we operate in the aftermath of the destruction of the Soviet Union and the consequent strengthening of American imperialism. But the first part of Marx's statement is just as true and in a sense more important. Men make their own history, the past does not predetermine the future.

You see, we aim to make history and we can. As the American section of the International Communist League, we are trying to build in this country a revolutionary party, centrally based on the multiracial working class and the black, Latino and other oppressed sections of American society. The goal of such a workers party will be to destroy American imperialism from within, and in doing so open the road to world communism. Since the concept of communism has been subjected to such grievous, many-sided abuse and distortion, not the least by its professed adherents, I want to conclude by indicating our vision of a communist future as stated in our program:

> "The victory of the proletariat on a world scale would place unimagined material abundance at the service of human needs, lay the basis for the elimination of classes and the eradication of social inequality based on sex and the very abolition of the social significance of race, nation and ethnicity. For the first time mankind will grasp the reins of history and control its own creation, society, resulting in an undreamed-of emancipation of human potential, and a monumental forward surge of civilization. Only then will it be possible to realize the free development of each individual as the condition for the free development of all."

For those of you who find this vision of the future attractive, you might consider joining us and then you, too, can make history. ■

NYC NOTICE

The New York Spartacist League's public office will not be open on Saturday, May 10. The SL will be debating the League for the Revolutionary Party on that day. For details, see page 2.

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Zimbabwe...

(continued from page 12)

A Dutch journalist of evident left-wing sympathies, Bram Posthumus, neatly cut through the cant and hypocrisy on both sides:

> "Most 'Rhodies' are unreformed racists and I would not want to be in the company of any of them.
>
> "On the other hand, the Zanu-PF [ruling Zimbabwe African National Union—Popular Front] top brass was cashing in on white largesse when it suited them. They did not question the economic models that they now claim were foisted upon them by the IMF and World Bank. Why should they? Capitalism has suited them fine ever since they came into power....
>
> "The point here is, very basically, that neither of these two groups, white farmers and Zanu-PF chiefs, deserve a shred of sympathy, let alone support."
>
> —*New African*, February 2002

The land seizures in Zimbabwe have resonated strongly in South Africa, where white farmers still own 80 percent of the land even though Nelson Mandela's bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress (ANC) replaced the white-supremacist government in 1994. Indeed, in the countryside the conditions of the black toilers have changed little from the days of apartheid. In some ways they're even worse. Seeking to forestall land seizures, white farmers have evicted increasing numbers of blacks from land they have worked for generations. At the same time, South African president Thabo Mbeki has acted as the "soft cop" for British and American imperialism vis-à-vis Mugabe. While Mbeki and Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo are loath to publicly denounce Mugabe, as this would reveal them as pawns of the imperialists in Africa, they are currently embarked on a visit to the Zimbabwean capital of Harare to press Mugabe to resign.

An article by our comrades of Spartacist South Africa, titled "Hue and Cry over Land Seizures in Zimbabwe" (*WV* No. 741, 8 September 2000), explained:

> "In countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa, the burning democratic tasks such as agrarian revolution, equality for women and tribal/ethnic minorities and breaking the yoke of imperialist domination can only be realised through the Trotskyist programme of permanent revolution: the seizure of state power by the proletariat standing at the head of the peasantry and all the oppressed....
>
> "Especially in a small country like Zimbabwe, a socialist revolution would inevitably and almost immediately pose the task of international extension—in the first instance to neighbouring South Africa, which supplies most of Zimbabwe's petrol and electrical power, and beyond that to the imperialist centres."

South Africa holds the key to the future of all of sub-Saharan Africa. The rule of the capitalist ANC means continued brutal exploitation and oppression of South Africa's black, "coloured" (historically derived from the offspring of Boer settlers and the indigenous Khoi people and later Malay slaves) and Indian working masses by the white racist bourgeoisie and the enforcing of the imperialists' plundering of the region. Under a workers government, South Africa's industrial and mineral wealth, as part of an international planned economy, would be used to develop the vast resources of the region for the benefit of the former colonial slaves in a socialist federation of southern Africa.

Zimbabwean ISO in Bloc with White Farmers, Capitalists

The counterpart to the current hostility of Western, especially British, imperialism to the Mugabe regime is the imperialists' support for the MDC. The MDC is an unholy alliance between black trade-union bureaucrats, represented by former ZCTU head Morgan Tsvangirai, and white capitalists and farmers. Currently, the regime is staging a sham trial of Tsvangirai, who during last year's presidential elections was riding a wave of popular support as an MDC candidate. Tsvangirai and two others are accused of plotting to kill Mugabe. The regime's star witness in this frame-up is a former secret service agent who admits to being on Mugabe's payroll.

Reuters

no credit

Election rally of Movement for Democratic Change (left), headed by trade-union leader Morgan Tsvangirai (right). Zimbabwean ISO supported imperialist-backed party of white landowners.

For its part, the MDC's main economic spokesman is Eddie Cross, former vice president of the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries, who is an ardent champion of "free market" neoliberalism and a strong advocate of IMF/World Bank guardianship over the Zimbabwean economy. The MDC receives financing from the likes of the London-based Westminster Foundation for Democracy, which in turn is partly funded by the British government.

A group that occupied the left fringe of the MDC until recently is the Zimbabwean International Socialist Organisation (ISO), part of the British-centered international tendency founded and led for many decades by the late Tony Cliff. While claiming (at times) to uphold the Leninist and Trotskyist tradition, the Cliffites are in fact left social democrats, i.e., a pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist tendency which falsely claims to represent the interests of the working class.

The social-democratic character of the Cliffite tendency was clearly exposed in Zimbabwe, where they were in a political bloc with the colonial-derived and imperialist-backed white propertied classes against the Mugabe regime. In 2000, Munyarardzi Gwisai, then a senior leader of the Zimbabwean ISO, ran for and was elected to parliament as a representative of the MDC for the Highland district of Harare. At the time, Gwisai & Co. portrayed the MDC as some kind of workers party which could be pressured into carrying out radical socialist policies. An ISO "Action Programme" for the first MDC congress proclaimed: "MDC is primarily a working people's party: that is workers, the unemployed, peasants and students and it is they who must fund and lead the party" (*Socialist Worker* [Zimbabwe], December 1999). Although the mass of white farmers supported and some joined the MDC, the Cliffites ludicrously demanded that its parliamentary representatives "must vote in support of the taking of farms without paying compensation for the land" (*Socialist Worker* [Zimbabwe], August 2000).

By the time of last year's presidential elections, it was no longer credible to deny that the MDC was a right-wing, pro-imperialist bourgeois party. Alex Callinicos, a central leader of the Cliffite tendency internationally, now lamented that Tsvangirai had fallen under the influence of evil advisers: "Despite his origins as a union leader, MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai has, with the encouragement of both Western governments and local bosses, adopted a neo-liberal programme that amounts to handing the economy over to the IMF" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 19 January 2002). Nonetheless, the Zimbabwean ISO still *supported* the MDC leader in the election against Mugabe. Gwisai stated: "We will vote for Tsvangirai because it will mean more space for us to operate.... We want to strengthen the anti-capitalist elements in the MDC" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 9 March 2002).

Interestingly, Callinicos came from the white colonial stratum in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe before emigrating to England. There is, of course, nothing reprehensible in that. Many left-wing leaders (Engels, Lenin, the anarchist Peter Kropotkin) and militants came from socially privileged backgrounds. But they then sought to lead the struggles of the exploited and oppressed against the propertied classes into which they were born. However, Callinicos and his Zimbabwean colleagues were in a bloc with white landowners against a black bourgeois-nationalist regime which, for its own ignoble reasons, is expropriating them.

The April 2002 issue of *International Socialism*, the main Cliffite theoretical journal, has a major article, "Crisis in Zimbabwe," by Leo Zeilig. Predictably, he directs almost all his fire at Mugabe with only the mildest criticism of the MDC, that it "holds none of the answers to the poverty and misery crippling Zimbabwe." This is scarcely surprising for a party which represents the main body of (white) agrarian and industrial capitalists in Zimbabwe and their British imperialist godfathers.

Zeilig points to and implicitly criticizes the propaganda campaign in British ruling circles against Mugabe. But he then concludes in this regard: "There is not much to choose between the violence and repression of a dying regime, and the hypocrisy and colonial morality of [Britain's] New Labour." This self-styled revolutionary socialist here *equates* British imperialism with a bourgeois-nationalist government in an African neocolonial country. That is, he *equates* an imperialist state with a semicolonial country.

But in fact Zeilig, Callinicos and Gwisai do choose between British imperialism and the government of Zimbabwe. They choose the former. Indeed, in his article, Zeilig boasts of Gwisai's parliamentary victory in 2000 as a representative of the MDC—a party openly financed by the British ruling class—writing: "The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) won an important seat in a working class area of Harare in the 2000 parliamentary elections as part of the MDC and, despite continued opposition from the party leadership, remains in the organisation."

As is often the case, what the *International Socialism* article omits is just as telling politically as its content. Zeilig does not mention that all Western governments have cut off economic aid to Zimbabwe mainly to strengthen the hand of the MDC against Mugabe. Nor does he mention that the Blair government in Britain is campaigning for international economic sanctions against Zimbabwe. These omissions amount to tacit support or at least non-opposition to imperialist economic warfare against the impoverished southern African country.

AP

April 16: Women collect food at emergency distribution center. Over 60 percent of population of Zimbabwe faces starvation.

From Ian Smith's Rhodesia to Mugabe's Zimbabwe

Having preserved and protected the white farmers for almost two decades, why did Mugabe then turn on them, thereby provoking the wrath of British and American imperialism? To answer that question, it is necessary to review the history of Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe from the last period of colonial rule through the present.

In the mid 1960s, Britain, with America's backing, moved toward a standard neocolonial solution in Southern Rhodesia, i.e., the smooth transfer of governmental office to a pliant black regime. However, under the leadership of Ian Smith—who professed his support for the MDC last year—the white colonialist stratum, though only 4 percent of the population, rebelled against this policy and declared "unilateral independence" from Britain. "Independent" Rhodesia was supported economically by white-supremacist South Africa, the most powerful state in the region.

Seeking to overthrow white-colonialist rule, the black nationalist forces launched a rural-based guerrilla insurgency which convulsed the country during the 1970s. However, the Ian Smith regime, with South Africa's backing, was able to hold at bay the black insurgency while resisting pressure from London and Washington to come to terms with the insurgency's leaders. The black liberation struggle was also weakened by a murderously hostile tribalist division between Robert Mugabe's ZANU, based on the majority Shona people, and Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African

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Zimbabwe...

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People's Union based on the Ndebele.

Finally, in 1979 Thatcher's Britain brokered a compromise—the Lancaster House agreement. Mugabe's ZANU took over the government while the whites retained control of the economy. The Lancaster House agreement stipulated that for ten years the government could not take over white farmland without the consent of the owners, and then compensation had to be in "hard" (Western) currency. The property rights of the white colonialists were also written into Zimbabwe's new constitution.

A recent book on the Zimbabwean economy by two British academics described the structure of ownership at the time of independence:

> "Although they made up only 3.8 per cent of the population, at Independence the modern sector of the economy was almost entirely owned and managed by whites. For example, over 90 percent of marketed output came from white- (or foreign-owned) farms, which provided 35 per cent of formal-sector employment and over one-third of exports. The manufacturing and financial sectors were also almost exclusively a white preserve."
>
> —Carolyn Jenkins and John Knight, *The Economic Decline of Zimbabwe: Neither Growth Nor Equity* (2002)

In the decade after independence, little had changed in this respect. Academic studies in Britain indicated that the white propertied classes were economically better off after ten years of Mugabe's rule than they had been in the last years of the Ian Smith regime.

While maintaining the wealth of the white propertied classes, the Mugabe regime also built up a privileged black elite via the state treasury. A large government bureaucracy was formed under ZANU-PF's patronage. Outright corruption was systemic and massive while the government set up and financed numerous black-owned businesses. The Mugabe regime therefore consistently ran large government budget deficits even in fairly prosperous years. These deficits were initially financed by borrowing heavily from City of London and Wall Street banks at commercial rates of interest. Consequently, the burden of foreign debt doubled from a third of Zimbabwe's gross domestic product (GDP) in 1986 to two-thirds of its GDP by 1994.

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 led to the intensification of imperialist bloodsucking in Africa, and with it increased starvation and bloodshed. Specifically, the IMF and World Bank demanded payment on the money they had previously given to these African countries as a counterweight to Soviet influence during the Cold War. In order to roll over Zimbabwe's foreign loans, the IMF/World Bank demanded the standard combination of fiscal austerity and "free market" liberalization: slashing expenditure for social programs; eliminating or cutting back the wide array of government subsidies; dismantling tariff protection for the country's manufacturing industries like textiles, clothing and footwear.

The effects were predictably devastating for almost all sectors of the urban-based labor force. Employment in the textile industry fell by half, from 25,300 in 1990 to 12,400 in 1995. Also hit hard were the more privileged ("middle class") sections of the black populace which had hitherto been the core support for the Mugabe regime—government functionaries, university students expecting upon graduation to get government or government-subsidized jobs. Some 25,000 civil service jobs were eliminated by 1995.

The stage was thus set for mass labor struggles for the first time since the black bourgeois-nationalist regime replaced white colonial rule a decade and a half before. A successful strike of public-sector employees in 1996 was followed by a general strike, with broad popular support, against increased taxation at the end of 1997. Immediately thereafter food riots led by working-class women erupted in Harare. The ZCTU emerged as a potent oppositional force enjoying substantial and increasing popular authority, especially in the cities.

Mugabe responded by seeking to refurbish the regime's nationalist credentials by declaring economic warfare on the white farmers. The ZANU-PF tops demagogically revived the rhetoric of the 1970s independence struggle, denouncing "white racism," "Western imperialism" and "the heritage of colonialism." The ZCTU bureaucracy under Morgan Tsvangirai played into the regime's hands, especially among the peasant masses, by forming a political bloc with the white farmers and other capitalists through the MDC.

Len Kumalo

Massive public workers' protest in Johannesburg, 1999. South African proletariat is key to emancipation of sub-Saharan Africa from imperialist domination.

The Land Seizures and Economic Collapse

The land seizures began in early 2000 with the invasion of white commercial farms by veterans of the independence struggle and unemployed urban youth. In several instances, this resulted in violent clashes with farm workers fearful of losing their jobs. Today, almost all the white farmland has been taken over and many of the former owners have left the country.

An apologist for the Mugabe regime, Gregory Elich, recently declared:

> "Temporary economic dislocation is an unavoidable by-product of land reform, but genuine and lasting progress in Zimbabwe can only be achieved through land redistribution.
>
> "In the West, the gross imbalance imposed by colonial theft is accepted as the natural order in Zimbabwe, with the indigenous population lacking any claim to the land. The government's fast track land reform is intended to rectify historical injustices and to ensure a more equitable division of the land."
>
> —*New African*, October 2002

To begin with, the redivision of the land has been far from equitable. Of the first 600 white farms taken over three years ago, 200 of the largest were given gratis to officials of the ZANU-PF and to Mugabe's cronies and relatives, including his wife. Inspecting her new 2,500-acre estate, Grace Mugabe announced to the assembled agricultural laborers: "I am taking over this farm" (*Guardian Weekly* [London], 21-27 November 2002). Only such members of the post-colonial black ruling elite have the money to operate the commercial farms at a profit. The mass of black peasants who now occupy much of this land in most cases don't even have seeds to plant next year's crop to feed their families.

Let us consider the arguments of Mugabe apologists like Gregory Elich at face value and assume the Zimbabwean government is genuinely committed to bettering the conditions of the black peasantry through an equitable division of land. Where would it get the financial resources to supply seeds, fertilizer and farm machinery to hundreds of impoverished black smallholders? The country is already massively in debt to British and American banks. And one can hardly expect the British ruling class to subsidize the expropriation of Zimbabwe's white farmers with whom, in some cases, they have family as well as financial ties.

In an interview in December with the state-controlled newspaper *The Herald*, Mugabe admitted: "We took it for granted that the supplies would be adequate." But, he continued, "it then proved that we were mistaken. Seed is short, fertilizer is short and tillage is inadequate." According to UN sources, more than half the government's tractor fleet—which was supposed to plow fields for poor farmers—is out of service because of shortages of spare parts and fuel.

During the 1990s, Zimbabwe produced an average annual grain (corn and wheat) crop of almost two million metric tons. Last year, the grain crop was less than half a million tons. (A contributing factor was lack of rainfall, which resulted in crop failures throughout southern Africa.) One doesn't have to be an apologist for the white farmers or Western imperialists to recognize that millions of people in Zimbabwe now face conditions of famine. Indeed, it is a measure of the bankruptcy of Mugabe's neocolonial regime that the transparently direct benefactors of British imperialism, the MDC, could have any level of popular support.

Agriculture in Modern World Capitalism

In his *Herald* interview, Mugabe triumphantly proclaimed: "For us, the most valuable resource and source of our wealth is our land." But land as such is no longer the most valuable non-labor resource in agricultural production. Chemical fertilizer can enhance the natural fertility of the soil. Irrigation can supplement inadequate rainfall. In general, a modern commercial farm, producing for the world market, employs a level of technology comparable to that of an industrial enterprise producing for the world market. To effectively manage such a "factory in the field" requires years of specialized education and training.

The development of modern agriculture was projected a century ago by Karl Kautsky, then considered the leading Marxist theorist, in a major work, *The Agrarian Question* (1900). Lenin regarded *The Agrarian Question* as a very important contribution to a Marxist understanding of the changing world capitalist economy. (Kautsky's later rightist revisionism and hostility to the Bolshevik Revolution does not negate the value of his earlier works.)

Kautsky recognized that just as developments in science and technology had transformed small-scale handicraft manufacturing into large-scale mechanized industry, similar developments, albeit later and more slowly, were occurring in agriculture:

> "Within a few years agriculture, traditionally the most conservative of occupations, nearly devoid of progress for almost an entire millennium and utterly devoid for several centuries, suddenly became one of the most revolutionary branches of modern industry, if not the most revolutionary. This transformation meant that agriculture progressed from being a *handicraft*, whose routines were passed down through the generations, to being a *science*, or rather a complex of sciences, undergoing a rapid expansion in both its empirical and theoretical knowledge. Any farmer not fully at home with such sciences, the mere 'practician,' will be helpless and baffled in the face of current innovations, yet cannot continue in the old ways." [emphasis in original]

Kautsky pointed out that the economic size of a modern capitalist farm is to be measured not in acreage per se but rather in capital per acre, which is directly related to crop yield per acre:

> "The law according to which the more intensive the cultivation of the farm, the smaller its area must be for a given volume of capital also works in the same direction. An intensively farmed small estate represents a larger enterprise than a large, extensively cultivated one."

While Kautsky foresaw the direction of agricultural development, he misjudged its pace. Small-scale, traditional peasant farming remained economically viable even in West and Central Europe, not to speak of more backward regions of the world, for several decades. His description of a scientifically managed, mechanized farm was not so much an empirical picture of European agriculture at the time as an anticipation of the future.

Following the Second World War, the revolution in agricultural technology, the beginnings of which Kautsky had analyzed, radically altered both the structure of agricultural production and pattern of trade throughout the capitalist world. The United States came to dominate the world market for basic foodstuffs, including rice and soybeans, the traditional staples of East Asian civilization. At the same time, a number of major "Third World" countries (e.g., Mexico, South Korea, Indonesia) now export industrial products and cash crops and import foodstuffs, mainly from North America.

For a Socialist Federation of Southern Africa!

The desperate plight of Zimbabwean peasants who now occupy the former white-owned commercial farms was

Spartacist South Africa

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described in Kautsky's classic work on the agrarian question:

> "The independent peasant farm has become untenable: it can only continue by being associated with a large establishment. If a nearby large industrial enterprise employs peasants as wage-labourers, or specialised workers, they will become its slaves. Where no such establishment exists, the peasant needs a large agricultural enterprise to avoid sinking into extreme poverty."

In all likelihood, most peasants on the former white farms will revert to the kind of subsistence agriculture which they practiced on the so-called "communal" lands. Since agricultural produce (especially tobacco) has accounted for half of Zimbabwe's export earnings, a large-scale reversion to subsistence farming will lead to further massive contraction of the modern urban-based sectors, from factories to universities. What then is to be done? The answer does not lie purely within the boundaries of this poor southern African country.

However, across Zimbabwe's southern border is South Africa, the one relatively industrialized country in sub-Saharan Africa. For example, South Africa generates more than half the electric power in the entire continent. The key force for social progress throughout the region is South Africa's large, powerful and combative proletariat, predominantly black but with important coloured and Indian components. What is key is to mobilize that power in a struggle for socialist revolution.

But to realize that program, black workers must be broken from their current political allegiance to the ANC regime, the black front men for the white capitalists who still own the country's factories, mines and farms. Spartacist South Africa, section of the International Communist League, seeks to build a Bolshevik workers party that will lead the struggle against all forms of national and social oppression—the mass homelessness in the black townships, the hideous conditions of millions still trapped in the former "tribal reserves" (bantustans), the degradation of women through reactionary tribal traditions such as *lobola* (the bride price), government persecution of and vigilante attacks on immigrants from other African countries.

The land question is an important motor force for socialist revolution in South Africa. Some 55,000 white commercial farmers own 250 million acres of the most fertile land upon which work about a million black agricultural laborers and their families. At the same time, 1.2 million black households, numbering some seven million people, are crowded into 40 million acres in the former "tribal reserves." Here are concentrated the poorest of South Africa's poor. Largely women, children and the aged, they are mainly supported by remittances from husbands, brothers, sons and other relatives working in the country's factories and mines. Insofar as the inhabitants of the former "reserves" earn their own money, it is mainly from seasonal, migrant labor on nearby white-owned farms. The large majority of South Africa's rural toilers are thus agricultural proletarians rather than smallholding peasants. A workers revolution in South Africa would expropriate the highly mechanized and capital-intensive white-owned farms and transform them into modern, large-scale collective and state farms, thereby providing a decent living for South Africa's rural toilers.

The agrarian question in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in southern Africa is significantly different. While 350,000 agricultural laborers and their families worked on the white-owned commercial farms, their number was dwarfed by the six to seven million peasants engaged mainly in subsistence farming in the "communal" lands. As we have seen, the Mugabe regime was able to exploit and manipulate the land hunger of these dispossessed peasants against the MDC opposition (and also against the agricultural laborers).

A workers and peasants government in Zimbabwe, in the context of a socialist federation of southern Africa, would establish soviets (councils) of rural toilers, both poor peasants and agricultural laborers, which would democratically determine which land was organized as collective or state farms and which was kept by (or distributed to) individual peasant families. But a workers state in such a backward country will be immediately faced with the problem of how to acquire items like tractors and other farm machinery, which are essential to the collectivization of agriculture. The solution to this fundamentally lies outside the borders of Zimbabwe or, indeed, southern Africa as a whole. Only an expanding collectivized economy, based on the necessary extension of proletarian revolution to the advanced industrial countries and an internationally planned economy, could provide the necessary resources and technology to free rural workers from backbreaking labor while absorbing in industry or construction those former peasants and agricultural workers no longer needed to work the land.

It is not only the land question which unites the Zimbabwean and South African masses. The Ndebele people, for example, reside on both sides of the border, which was arbitrarily drawn according to the interests of British colonialism. Furthermore, Zimbabweans make up a sizable proportion of migrant workers who slave in the mines and on the commercial farms of South Africa. These face constant persecution and deportations by the state and murderous attacks by anti-immigrant vigilantes, and are used as scapegoats by the ANC for the massive unemployment. At the same time, the migrant workers are a living link between the South African proletariat and the toiling masses throughout the region. Spartacist South Africa fights for the labor movement to take up the defense of migrant workers and all immigrants, demanding full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

This is part of our larger struggle for a socialist federation of southern Africa, in which there will be a place for all the myriad peoples of the region, including those whites who accept the rule of a government centrally based on the black proletariat and rural toilers. Only workers rule can break the yoke of imperialist domination. This program is necessarily linked to the perspective of proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of North America, West Europe and Japan. A workers revolution in Zimbabwe would spark revolutionary upheavals throughout the area, particularly in South Africa. And a proletarian victory in South Africa would inspire workers across the world, not least black workers in the U.S. To fully provide the resources and technology to liberate the peoples of Africa from famine and desperate poverty requires the international extension of the revolution.■

NEFAC...

(continued from page 4)

League and Spartacus Youth Clubs intervened to win antiwar protesters to the understanding that the working class must take up defense of Iraq against the U.S. and that only socialist revolution can end imperialist war. To that end, we mobilized our Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents in many of the nationwide demonstrations under the slogans: ***All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!***

Since the mass antiwar rallies proved ineffectual, many youth took up direct action protest. But through this direct action—without a force of sufficient social weight animated by a revolutionary program—the same dead-end pressure politics are at work. Behind the more attractive militancy is the timeworn pacifist idea that if courage is shown in taking the blows of the oppressor, the "evildoers" will undergo a moral regeneration and work for the betterment of humanity. A ruling class that glories in mass slaughter in Iraq will not mind dishing out cop attacks or jail sentences to its perceived opponents at home. Moreover, as the anti-globalization protests of the late 1990s showed, setting oneself up as an easy target for state repression is hardly inspiring to the oppressed masses who face factory exploitation and police terror on a daily basis. It is the potential for *victory*, not victimization, that will rally the oppressed masses to a revolutionary movement.

The proponents of direct action think that if you "disrupt business as usual" through acts of civil disobedience you can "force the rulers to listen" and thereby create a real democracy. This falsely assumes that the ruling class, or a section of it, would "do the right thing" if only we could grab their attention and show the way. Some of those who engage in civil disobedience locate the problems of capitalism in the appetites of a few corporations, specially targeting them for "correction." But it's a *system* that's at work.

Open City also hopes that the military's "business as usual" can be disrupted. Thus they state, "The rank-and-file of the military can do this [stop war], by refusing orders." But the army is not a democracy! Rank-and-file soldiers who refuse to obey the officer corps can be court-martialed and shot. A perspective of individual martyrdom can never generate a mass revolutionary movement of the working class. The idea that war will end when individual soldiers, one by one, decide to refuse to fight is an old and discredited notion. It properly belongs to religious pacifists like the Quakers, who believe that what happens in society is the sum total of the moral decisions of each individual. But in capitalist class society, the ruling class has the power to compel the young workers to fight its wars or face the consequences. The working class must organize to take that power away from them through socialist revolution.

Leon Trotsky, co-leader of the only successful workers revolution in history, the Russian Revolution, and later commander of the Red Army, observed in his *History of the Russian Revolution* (1932):

> "There is no doubt that the fate of every revolution at a certain point is decided by a break in the disposition of the army. Against a numerous, disciplined, well-armed and ably led military force, unarmed or almost unarmed masses of the people cannot possibly gain a victory. But no deep national crisis can fail to affect the army to some extent. Thus along with the conditions of a truly popular revolution there develops a possibility—not, of course, a guarantee—of victory."

As in Russia in 1917, the military can be split only when bourgeois rule is in the grip of a deep social crisis and the proletariat shows itself to be a real contender for power, organized and conscious of its aims through the active intervention of a vanguard party.

For New October Revolutions!

But even when proletarian power is realized, anarchists deny the revolution the right to consolidate its gains in the form of working-class rule. Just as the capitalist state is the fundamental force for defending the capitalists and their interests against the workers, so too is the workers state the central organization for defending the workers and their interests against counterrevolution. Anarchists renounce the state in general, which explains why they renounced defense of the Russian Revolution.

To justify their refusal to stand with the gains the working class has already won, the anarchists of NEFAC and Open City claim that capitalism was never overthrown, just restructured into "state capitalism." Thus Open City writes, "With the collapse of the state capitalist Soviet Union, a struggle for dominance is also fought out behind the scenes with wealthy competitors [to the U.S.], the imperialist states of Europe and Japan." But if the Soviet Union was just "state capitalist," why did it make such a difference that it became supposedly plain capitalist and changed its name to Russia?

The destruction of the USSR has emboldened the U.S. bourgeoisie to pursue its unbridled appetites for world domination. We Trotskyists of the International Communist League fought until the end in defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states of the USSR and East Europe, and those leftists who capitulated to anti-Soviet bourgeois public opinion and cheered counterrevolution can only be seen as complicit in the horrors inflicted in consequence. And the question is not merely a historical one: the devastation that counterrevolution has wreaked on the former Soviet Union shows graphically why all those who support the international proletariat must defend the remaining deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba.

At the same time that they recoil from defense of gains already won, anarchists shun the task of party building essential to new victories. Although radical youth by their own "direct actions" will never actually disrupt the system of profit and war, historically mass working-class movements, with the social power to effectively paralyze capitalist society, have done so. In Italy in the early 1920s, the radicalized proletariat engaged in nonstop strikes and general strikes for two years. But the workers lacked the resolute revolutionary leadership to take the offensive against the ruling class and fight for state power. While capitalist society was held hostage, it was never dealt its death blow. The crisis drove the desperate middle classes into the arms of reaction, and Mussolini's Fascists came to power, welcomed by the bourgeoisie in the name of restoring order.

Capitalism cannot be reformed; it must be overthrown. We fight to build the party that can make the revolution possible. Even if today's anarchists could somehow win mass support, they would have no more of a clue than the Spanish anarchists or Italian syndicalists of how to finally put an end to this hateful system. Youth serious about wanting to change the world would do well by studying the lessons of history and Marxist theory with the SYCs while intervening in social struggles alongside us.■

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Tuesday, 7 p.m.

May 20: **For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
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WORKERS VANGUARD

New Evidence on Phony "Confession"

Free Mumia Now!

WV Photo

Last month yet another new witness came forward to rip apart remaining shreds of the already demolished frame-up of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. One of the main legs of the prosecution's frame-up of Mumia for the 1981 killing of police officer Daniel Faulkner was that Mumia supposedly confessed while in a hospital emergency room profusely bleeding from a gunshot wound to the stomach. That this "confession" was a police concoction was exposed long ago. Now, in an April 18 declaration, Kenneth Pate, stepbrother of Priscilla Durham, the Jefferson Hospital security guard who testified at Jamal's 1982 trial that he "confessed," disclosed that she subsequently recanted to Pate during a telephone conversation some 18 months after the trial.

As Pate describes, Durham told him that when Mumia was brought to the hospital he was "all bloody and the police were interfering with his treatment, saying 'let him die'." Cops pressured her that as a security guard she "had to stick with them" as part of the "'hrotherhood' of police" and to "say that she heard Mumia say that he killed the police officer, when they brought Mumia in on a stretcher." She confided to her brother, "All I heard him say was: 'Get off me, get off me, they're trying to kill me'."

At trial, Durham and police officer Garry Bell testified to hearing Jamal shout out, "I shot the mother f----r, and I hope the mother f----r dies." Yet not a word was said about this "confession" until more than two months after the fact, after a "round table" meeting called by the District Attorney's office to orchestrate the cops' trial testimony. It was not in Bell's police log that night nor in a statement he gave a week later. Gary Wakshul, the cop assigned to guard Jamal and who was with him the entire time between his arrest and medical treatment, gave an official report to homicide detectives an hour later that "during this time, the negro male made no comments."

Over two years ago, Jamal's attorneys submitted to court the sworn affidavit of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, killed officer Faulkner. But to date, the courts have refused to even consider Beverly's confession. In December 2001, a federal court overturned Jamal's death sentence while affirming the frame-up murder conviction, condemning Jamal to a life behind bars. The state appealed, seeking the reinstitution of the death sentence, while Jamal's attorneys appealed, seeking to have the conviction overturned. Both appeals are on hold, pending a Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling on another appeal by Jamal's attorneys of a state court order barring Beverly's testimony. Last month Pate's declaration was submitted to both appeals courts.

Despite conclusive evidence of his innocence, April 24 marked Mumia's 22nd consecutive birthday on Pennsylvania's death row. His fight for freedom illustrates that for a defiant and outspoken opponent of this racist system like Jamal, there is no justice in the capitalist courts. As the introduction to the Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!* explained: "The long hidden and suppressed evidence of Mumia's innocence is the truth. But in this capitalist system of injustice, the truth is insufficient to secure Jamal's freedom. What we need is not just more truth but more social power. It is elementary that if labor's power is to be brought to bear in a mighty blow on Jamal's behalf, it must be mobilized independently of the very forces of the capitalist state that have worked for years to frame up and kill this innocent man." ***Mobilize now to free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!***■

Zimbabwe: "Land Reform" and Imperialist Hypocrisy

Zimbabwe today is a country on the brink of famine and total economic collapse. Since last year, inflation has skyrocketed at a rate of 228 percent and unemployment stands at more than 60 percent. Tobacco production, which generates 31 percent of the country's foreign currency, is projected to plummet by a third. And with no seed for corn, Zimbabwe's primary food source, at least 60 percent of the population faces food shortages—this in a country which was once one of Africa's largest exporters of foodstuffs.

When the government, pressed for funds, raised gas prices by at least 200 percent, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) launched a three-day general strike in late April, to which the government responded in its usual repressive fashion, using troops to force closed shops to open. Dozens of ZCTU officials have been rounded up, including nearly the entire union leadership in the city of Bulawayo. The previous month, the British-supported "Movement for Democratic Change" (MDC) staged a two-day strike, which was followed by a government crackdown where hundreds of MDC supporters were arrested.

The current crisis in Zimbahwe is largely a product of the imperialists' cutoff of economic aid for the country after President Robert Mugabe initiated his program of seizing land owned by white farmers, remnants of the former colonial occupation. The bourgeois press in Britain, Zimbabwe's former colonial master, has accused the African leader of unleashing "mob savagery" against the white population. In the U.S., Republican Congressman Ed Royce, chairman of the House Committee on Africa, denounced Mugabe as "a power-crazed, aged dictator literally burning his country down."

Rob Carter

Imperialists have raised hue and cry over Mugabe regime's seizure of white-owned farms. Satisfying needs of impoverished black masses requires socialist revolution extending to South Africa and imperialist centers.

Yet for almost two decades Mugabe was regarded and occasionally praised by London and Washington as a "moderate" African leader because he perpetuated the economic dominance in both agriculture and industry of the former white colonialists. Western bourgeois politicians and the media scarcely noticed, much less protested, when in the mid 1980s the Mugabe regime waged a war of extermination against the forces of a rival nationalist movement based on the minority Ndebele people. The Zimbabwean army massacred at the time an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 villagers in Matabeleland, homeland of the Ndebele. As long as Mugabe's regime did not touch, indeed enhanced, the wealth of the white propertied classes, the men who run the City of London and Wall Street couldn't care less what he did to Zimbabwe's workers and peasants.

The backdrop to the current crisis was the economic austerity program carried out by the Mugabe regime in the early-mid 1990s at the dictate of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. This provoked a series of mass strikes spearheaded by government employees like teachers and nurses. So in the name of "fast-track land reform," Mugabe sought to divert popular hostility away from his own regime and toward the white farmers, the core of the former colonial ruling class in what was then called Southern Rhodesia, who still owned 70 percent of the country's most fertile land. Almost all of the older white farmers had been officers or non-coms in the Rhodesian army, which fought the black liberation forces led by Mugabe and others. These white colonialists killed some ***40,000 black Africans***, many of them unarmed and defenseless rural villagers.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 804 — 23 May 2003

Shredding Everybody's Rights

Down With Government War on Immigrants!

WV Photo

Los Angeles May Day march. Defense of immigrants is key to fight against government assaults on democratic rights.

Free All the Detainees!

While American occupation forces revel in their colonial slaughter, Iraqis without homes, jobs, food or clean water are getting a quick lesson in American "democracy"—last week chief civilian administrator L. Paul Bremer III ordered U.S. troops to shoot to kill alleged looters. In a sick joke, Washington dispatches "experts" to Baghdad to draft a constitution for Iraq while running the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights through the shredder. The easy U.S. victory in its one-sided slaughter in Iraq has further greased the skids for the Bush gang's police-state plans. More than a year and a half after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, just about every single right supposedly embodied in the Bill of Rights is under siege.

Under the Patriot Act and a panoply of executive orders, the government's secret police have vastly expanded authority to tap your phone, search your home, scour your financial records, interrogate your librarian and place you under arrest without probable cause that a crime has been committed. *And they want even more.* Earlier this month, the Senate passed, by a majority of 90 to 4, a new bill co-sponsored by New York Democrat Charles Schumer expanding the government's ability under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to use secret surveillance tools against people not tied to foreign governments or even "not thought to be members of known terrorist groups," as the *New York Times* (9 May) reported.

As the bombs began falling on Baghdad, Bush decreed "Operation Liberty Shield," mandating automatic detention of asylum-seekers from 34 countries and tightening "security" at domestic transportation facilities, including through increased surveillance of all passengers. Since March the Transportation Security Agency has been testing the Computer Assisted Passenger Pre-Screening System (CAPPS II), under which travelers will be labeled as "green," "yellow" or "red" security risks. Though reminiscent of the McCarthyite 1950s, when Communists were stripped of their passports, this could potentially affect far more people. As ACLU spokesman Katie Corrigan pointed out, "This system threatens to create a permanent blacklisted underclass of Americans who cannot travel freely." Dozens of leftists and peace activists on the airlines' "no fly list" were pulled from flights to prevent them from attending antiwar protests and other political events not to the liking of the government's thought police.

Two recent rulings underline that Bush, Ashcroft & Co. will justify no matter how tenuously or ludicrously, every new repressive measure on the basis of the "war on terror." Consider the case of 18-year-old Haitian immigrant David Joseph. In April, Ashcroft ordered that Joseph, who scrambled ashore in Florida in October, be detained indefinitely, overturning a ruling to the contrary by an Immigration Appeals court. Although there was no allegation that Joseph was dangerous, had anything to do with "terrorism," or had committed any crime other than trying to enter the U.S. to escape desperate poverty in that hellish American neocolony, Ashcroft cited the war on terrorism for this blatantly racist order. According to Ashcroft, releasing Joseph "would tend to encourage further surges of mass migration" by Haitians, with "attendant strains on national and homeland security resources."

Then on April 29, the Supreme Court upheld a provision of the draconian 1996 Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act mandating imprisonment of legal immigrants who are facing deportation for even the most minor convictions at some point in their lives, including decades before. Two years ago, the Supreme Court ruled in the *Zadvydas* case that such immigrants could not be held indefinitely, even if no country would accept them. Now, as an article by civil libertarian and Georgetown University professor David Cole in *Newsday* (15 May) put it, "The court for the first time upheld a law authorizing the preventive detention of individuals on a categorical basis" if they are non-citizens, "thus reneging on its own statement 50 years earlier that the due process clause does not 'acknowledge any distinction between citizens and resident aliens'." Cole continues:

> "History shows that what the government does to foreign nationals in the name of national security eventually gets extended to U.S. citizens. The guilt-by-association campaign of the McCarthy era was an extension to citizens of tactics first deployed against foreign nationals in the Palmer raids of 1919-20. The internment of 70,000 American citizens of Japanese descent during World War II was an extension to citizens of the historical treatment of 'enemy aliens' during wartime.
>
> "Double standards may be a politically tempting way to avoid the hard choices presented by the war on terrorism, but what we do to foreign nationals today will come back to haunt us tomorrow."

"Alice in Wonderland Meets Kafka"

Anyone who thinks they have nothing to fear had better wake up and smell the coffee. In justifying its plans, government spokesmen rant that "terrorist sleepers" lead outwardly normal lives—students, businessmen, parents and soccer dads—and therefore everybody is suspect. Even some right-wing Republicans are getting cold feet over the galloping pace of the attacks on civil liberties. An April 10 ACLU forum titled "Discussion with Conservatives: State of Civil Liberties Post 9/11" featured Lori Waters, a representative of Phyllis Schlafly's reactionary Eagle Forum. Waters prefaced her remarks by observing, "Everyone in this room is a suspect until it's proven that you're not" (*Village Voice*, 30 April). Last week, when Texas Democratic Party legislators hid out in an Oklahoma hotel to

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Victory: Charges Against Arlene Russell Dropped

Chicago

An important victory was won on April 21 when bogus charges of "assault" on a police officer were dropped against black Chicago bus driver Arlene Russell and an official apology was extended to her! This is a victory not just for Russell but for all intended victims of police brutality in "Segregation City."

Key to Russell's ability to beat back these charges is her membership in one of the city's most powerful unions, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241. The case sparked outrage among many transit workers, particularly women bus operators who face racist, anti-woman abuse on a daily basis. Dozens of Arlene's union brothers and sisters mobilized for her court hearings, sending a clear message that she did not stand alone. Both ATU Locals 241 and 308 went on record in defense of Russell, posting calls in bus barns and train yards urging members to come out in her defense. In a protest letter on Russell's behalf sent to the Cook County State's Attorney last August, then-Local 308 president Jerry Williams wrote, "ATU Local 308 and its membership of over 4,000 will not sit by while fellow transit workers or any minority workers continue to be victimized by some racist police officers who violently abuse them."

The railroading of Arlene Russell began last July 17, when, while driving the number 12 bus, she was arrested after passing an elderly man waving from the other side of the street. Police loaded the elderly man in their squad car and pulled in front of Russell's bus, cutting her off and forcing her to stop the bus. After the two cops jumped out of their patrol car, one of the officers began pounding on the bus door while shouting racial epithets, calling Russell a "stupid black bitch." When Russell used her cellphone to protest this racist abuse to the city's Office of Professional Standards, the cop who had hurled racist remarks tried to grab the phone out of her hand and then violently grabbed her arm. She was then arrested on fabricated assault charges and held for eight hours after her arrest while the cops ran her fingerprints through an international "terrorist" database.

This racist assault on Russell was just the first in a series of brutal police attacks on black Chicago bus drivers while on duty. Three months after Russell's arrest, a white cop pressed phony felony battery charges against Karen Kelly, another black bus operator, ludicrously claiming that she had intentionally tried to run him down with her bus. This February, yet another black ATU 241 driver, Henry Walker, was violently dragged off his bus, beaten and held for three days in custody. His crime? He and his busload of passengers witnessed the cops brutally beating a black man as he lay handcuffed in the street. Both Kelly and Walker face possible prison time on these fabricated charges. It is urgent that the union mobilize in defense of their own. Drop the charges against Karen Kelly and Henry Walker! All out to defend Kelly and Walker!

This string of attacks on unionized black bus drivers comes in the context of the government's "war on terror"—a war against immigrants, blacks and labor. In the post-9/11 climate of growing fear and intimidation, a victory such as Russell's is particularly noteworthy, underscoring the importance of bringing the social power of this union to bear in defense of its membership. That's a first step. What is posed on a larger scale is mobilizing the labor movement in defense of immigrants, black people and all working people—at home and abroad—against the all-sided attacks of America's racist capitalist rulers. As a recent Chicago Labor Black Struggle League newsletter (April 2003) stated in regard to the cases of Russell, Kelly and Walker:

> "In this climate, the racist cops think they have a green light to run over the rights of, and brutalize, anyone unfortunate enough to cross their path.... These drivers are not just nameless, faceless victims, however, but members of the powerful Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU). Many of the ATU brothers and sisters of these drivers victimized by the cops have mobilized in their defense, as has the LBSL. There will be no end to police brutality except through socialist revolution. What we desperately need is a militant, multiracial workers party to fight for the rights of all the oppressed and to fight for a workers government."

We urge all labor, student and community organizations to demonstrate their solidarity by attending the next court dates for Kelly and Walker. Karen Kelly is due to appear on June 2 at 10 a.m. at the Skokie Civic Court, 5600 Old Orchard Road, Room 208. Henry Walker's next court appearance will be on June 26 at 9:30 a.m. at Chicago's Criminal Courts Building, 2600 S. California St., Room 302. We also urge that protest statements be sent to: Richard Devine, Cook County State's Attorney, 500 Richard J. Daley Center, Chicago, IL 60602. Fax: (312) 603-3000.■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Communists and the Trade Unions

The recent explosion of strikes in France points to both the combativity of the French proletariat and the hampering of its struggles by its division into separate unions based on political affiliation. In a 1923 article addressed to French revolutionary syndicalists who had adhered to the Communist International, Leon Trotsky advocated the unity of the trade unions—the basic organizations of the working class for economic struggle against the capitalists—on an industrial basis. At the same time, Trotsky stressed the necessity for communists to fight inside the unions against the reformist misleaders and to win workers to the class-struggle banner of communism.

The Communist International has most determinedly combated the split in the trade union movement in France, that is, its actual conversion into syndicalist parties. The main consideration of the Communist International has been the historical task of the working class as a whole, and the enormous independent significance of the trade union organization for solving the tasks of the proletariat. In this respect, the Communist International has from its very inception defended the real and living independence of the trade unions, in the spirit of Marxism....

The Communists have no reason, either in their ideology or their organization, to hide themselves behind the trade unions. They do not misuse the trade unions for machinations behind the scenes. They do not split the trade unions when they are a minority in them. They do not in any way disturb the independent development of the trade unions, and they support trade union struggles with all their strength. But at the same time the Communist Party reserves the right of expressing its opinion on all questions in the working-class movement, including the trade union question, to criticize trade union tactics, and to make definite proposals to the trade unions, which, on their part, are at liberty to accept or reject these proposals. The party strives to win the confidence of the working class, above all, of that section organized in the trade unions....

The party, if it be worthy of the name, includes the whole vanguard of the working class and uses its ideological influence for rendering every branch of the labor movement fruitful, especially the trade union movement. But if the trade unions are worthy of their name, they include an ever growing mass of workers, many backward elements among them. But they can only fulfill their task when consciously guided on firmly established principles. And they can only have this leadership when their best elements are united in the party of proletarian revolution.

—Leon Trotsky, "A Necessary Discussion with Our Syndicalist Comrades" (March 1923), reprinted in *Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions* (Pathfinder Press, 1969)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 804 **23 May 2003**

Florida's Depraved Anti-Abortion Scheme

In a sinister move, last week Florida governor Jeb Bush, oozing concern for "the unborn child's best interests," personally appealed to the state Supreme Court to overturn a 1989 ruling and grant a legal "guardian" for the fetus of a 22-year-old mentally disabled woman. The woman became pregnant after she was raped in one of the state institutions in which she has lived most of her life. Anti-abortion bigots like Jeb Bush have seized on her particularly vulnerable situation to set a precedent. The Florida Department of Children and Families is seeking two guardians from the state court—one for the woman and one for the fetus—meaning that the woman's right to have an abortion would be subordinated to the "rights" of the fetus! If the Bush scheme is implemented, it would be another step toward declaring abortion "murder."

Similarly, the anti-abortion bigots have seized on the murder of California woman Laci Peterson, who was about eight months pregnant when she was killed. The man accused of her killing, her husband Scott, faces two murder charges—the second one for the fetus—in accordance with the law in California and 25 other states against "crimes" against "unborn victims." There have been four unsuccessful attempts since 1999 to make such laws federal. Utilizing the highly publicized Peterson case, anti-abortion U.S. Senators have again introduced the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act," hoping that this time they'll succeed. And these reactionaries have the full support of the Bush White House, which has signed the grotesquely named Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, mandating that an aborted fetus showing signs of life be considered a "person"; and last fall issued regulations extending health care coverage to fetuses—but not to poor pregnant women!

The moves to declare fetuses and embryos "sacred human life" are among hundreds of laws passed in states across the country in the past decade that have significantly eroded women's right (as well as access) to abortion. The crusade by anti-abortion bigots to again slam the door against this most basic and private health care decision for women is part of a broad ruling-class offensive against the democratic rights of all.

The Bush gang in the White House is certainly a scary bunch, rife with Christian fundamentalists who want to impose their reactionary "morality" on every aspect of everyone's personal life. But it was the Democrats who paved the way for Bush & Co.'s reactionary agenda. Playing to the Christian right, "born again" Democratic president Jimmy Carter in 1977 intoned in regard to the ban on federal funding of abortions for poor women, "There are many things in life that are not fair." Under "pro-choice" Bill Clinton, well over 200 state measures were passed restricting access to abortion. The strategy of reliance on the Democratic Party and the capitalist government has served to effectively *demobilize* the struggle in defense of abortion rights. Abortion rights, like other crucial democratic rights, were wrested from the capitalist class through tumultuous class and social struggle, not through lobbying the Democrats or the government. The fight to defend women's rights, including the right to abortion, must be broadened into a struggle against the entire capitalist system. ***For free abortion on demand! For women's liberation through socialist revolution!***

no credit

Miramax

The Magdalene Sisters: Women's Oppression and the Irish Clericalist State

For the Separation of Church and State!

Above left: Women were forced to slave in brutal conditions in Magdalene laundries, now depicted in new movie (above right).

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Ireland *No. 3 (Spring/Summer 2003), newspaper of the Spartacist Group Ireland, section of the International Communist League.*

One of the most powerful and popular films screened recently in Ireland was *The Magdalene Sisters*, which portrays the inhuman brutality and degradation women suffered as prisoners in one of the many Magdalene "laundries" run by the Catholic church from the early 19th century until 1996. Director Peter Mullan was inspired to make the film after seeing the powerful Channel 4 documentary on the laundries, *Sex in a Cold Climate*. The Vatican, which admits no wrongdoing, condemned the film as slanderous and tried to suppress it. Despite this, the film won the Venice Film Festival's Golden Lion award.

Approximately 30,000 mostly young and poor women were forcibly sent to these church prisons because they were considered "fallen women." The four protagonists of the film depict reasons women were incarcerated in the laundries: Margaret is raped by a cousin, Bernadette (an orphan) is considered too flirtatious, Rose and Crispina each has a child outside wedlock. Rose has her baby ripped from her arms only hours after giving birth and Crispina is later driven insane by her brutal treatment in the laundry and her separation from her son. There are also many older women who had spent most of their lives there. Women are forced to slave from early morning to evening in the profit-making laundries. Sister Bridget is repeatedly shown greedily counting the money. The women are beaten, degraded and suffer sexual abuse. All this that they might do penance for their "sins"!

The women were imprisoned not only by the walls of the laundries, but also through rejection by their families and society. In one scene in the film, Margaret has an opportunity to escape, but doesn't because she knows she has nowhere to go. When one of the other women does manage to escape, her father brings her back to the laundry and beats her. After Bernadette eventually escapes, she is terrified of being reimprisoned when she sees cops and nuns on the street.

Mary Norris recently described her experience in a Magdalene laundry in Cork:

> "Plenty of people will think the events in the film have been exaggerated to make it more dramatic. But I tell you, the reality of those places was a thousand times worse. There's a scene in which a girl is crying in the dormitory and another goes over to her bed to comfort her. That could never have happened. You weren't allowed any private conversation.
>
> "Again, in the film the girls get glimpses of the outside world and even ordinary people who don't live in the laundries. In reality, we were totally incarcerated. You could see nothing except sky."
>
> —*Irish Independent*, 8 March

It was not the Catholic church alone that was responsible for these institutions but the state as well. In *The Politics of Irish Social Policy 1600-1990*, Frederick W. Powell talks about state involvement with the Magdalene laundries:

> "The incarceration of these women, especially of women who had more than one child outside marriage (some of them women who had been deserted and could not legally remarry), was proposed by the Commission on the Relief of the Sick and Destitute Poor in 1927 and, writes Powell 'by 1932 an arrangement had been established between the local authorities and the sisters-in-charge of Magdalen asylums in Dublin and elsewhere for the containment of "this more intractable problem"'."
>
> —*The Irish Times*, 1 May 1999

Mary Norris was taken away from her unmarried mother by the Irish state: "A car drew up and a police officer and a child protection officer got out and told my mother they'd come to take us away as she was a bad example" (*Irish Independent*, 8 March). The role of the state in helping maintain these prisons is also shown in a scene in *The Magdalene Sisters* where the cops escort the young women through the local town in a "Corpus Christi" procession.

Clericalist Capitalist State: Enemy of Women

The Magdalene laundries were merely the tip of the iceberg of the crimes perpetrated against women and children by the Catholic church and the Irish clericalist state. As many as 300,000 children were locked in "industrial schools" where they were denied an education and forced to do manual work for no pay—slave labour—with the profits of their labour going to the church. From the 1940s to 1970s, a horrific medical procedure was carried out on pregnant women who would otherwise have had a caesarean birth. They were forcibly, and often without their knowledge or consent, subjected to an operation known as symphysiotomy, where the cartilage junction of the pubic bone was sawed through in order that the pelvis would "open like a hinge" during childbirth. As a consequence many women were crippled and condemned to a life of incredible pain and suffering. Expressing the Catholic-dominated medical profession's rationale for this inhuman butchery, Dr. Alex Spain argued that if caesarean births were carried out, "The results will be contraception, the mutilating operation of sterilisation, and marital difficulty" (*Irish Examiner*, 17 April 2001). Women were simply seen as vessels for making babies.

In addition to all this, there were the horrendous consequences of the church's "normal" ideological brainwashing. As prominent biologist and staunch atheist Richard Dawkins aptly noted in an interview with *The Dubliner* magazine (September 2002):

> "Regarding the accusations of sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests, deplorable and disgusting as those abuses are, they are not so harmful to the children as the grievous mental harm in bringing up the child Catholic in the first place. I had a letter from a woman in America in her forties, who said that when she was a child of about seven, brought up a Catholic, two things happened to her: one was that she was sexually abused by her parish priest. The second thing was that a great friend of hers at school died, and she had nightmares because she thought her friend was going to hell because she wasn't Catholic. For her there was no question that the greatest child abuse of those two was the abuse of being taught about hell. Being fondled by the priest was negligible in comparison."

The popularity of *The Magdalene Sisters* is an indication that many people have family members or know someone who was incarcerated in one of these prisons. The timing of the film also intersected outrage over a series of other scandals in the Catholic church, from the brutality dished out to children in "industrial schools" to the scores of cases of sexual abuse inflicted by priests, which sparked protests outside churches last year. Because of these protests and widespread outrage against the church hierarchy as well as some reforms in recent years, many people think that the role of the Catholic church in Ireland has fundamentally changed, that things like the Magdelene laundries are merely historical excesses. Indeed, the Irish bourgeoisie has for a number of years attempted to cultivate the image of Ireland as a modern, secular state. Despite some important but limited and reversible reforms—and the fact that many people no longer listen to church rules, especially regarding sexuality—Ireland remains a vicious clericalist state where there are strong ties between the state and the church.

Condoms were only legalised in 1985. Divorce (only legalised in 1997) is difficult to obtain. While homosexuality ceased to be a criminal offence in 1993, gays are beset by anti-gay bigotry on a daily basis. Meanwhile, abortion is still banned.

The Catholic church controls 93 percent of the schools (another 6 percent are run by the Church of Ireland) as well as most of the hospitals. In the budget for 2000, the government proposed to "individualise" the tax bands in order to encourage married women to enter the labour force but was met with howls of indignation by the bishops and backed down. The government has made sure that the church's massive wealth will be barely dented by compensation claims by people who suffered in the "industrial schools": a "secret" deal was arranged so that the religious orders will have to pay

continued on page 8

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For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

The Kurdish People and the U.S. Occupation of Iraq

The following is an edited presentation by Workers Vanguard Editorial Board member Bruce André at a Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club public educational in Berkeley on May 3.

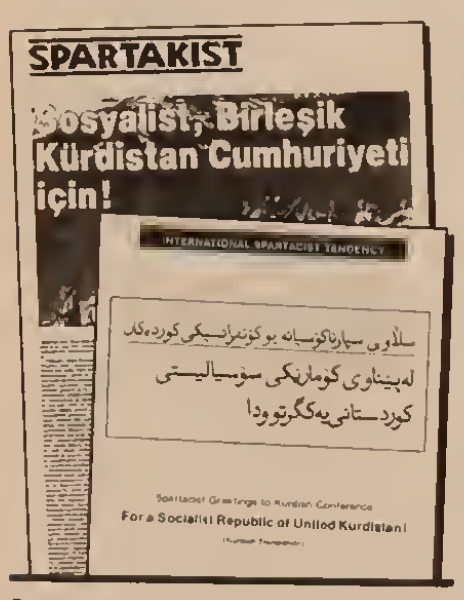
Colonial occupation of a country always reinforces and feeds on everything that is most reactionary in that society. We are seeing that rule of history played out in Iraq today under the U.S. colonial occupation. Islamic fundamentalists calling for an Islamic republic are on the march in the south, Baghdad is swarming with vermin hacked by the Pentagon or the CIA, maneuvering for a share of the country's wealth. All this against the backdrop of the devastation of the country's industry and infrastructure by 12 years of starvation sanctions, massive U.S. bombing, and finally widespread looting which U.S. troops allowed to go on while they raced to secure the oil fields.

Meanwhile, ethnic and religious conflicts are threatening to erupt in all-sided communalist slaughter. In Kurdistan in the north, in towns seized by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), both of which are operating under U.S. command, thousands of Arabs have been driven from their homes. Human Rights Watch called the expulsions a violation of Article 3 of the Geneva Convention on war crimes, which prohibits forced population transfers. Arabs in Mosul demonstrated, chanting not only "U.S. Out!" but also "Kurds Out!" U.S. troops fired into the crowds, killing 17 people in two days. The Turkmen minority in that city feels so threatened by Kurdish forces that many are calling for Turkish military intervention. One aid worker declared, "We are going from one war to another" (*Washington Post*, 17 April).

These ethnic conflicts are the legacy of British imperialist conquest following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. The British deliberately created a country divided against itself, with the Shi'ites in the south and Kurds in the north lorded over by the same Sunni Muslim elites who had ruled under the Ottomans. Decades of rule by bourgeois-nationalist regimes further deepened ethnic divides. Saddam Hussein, whose Ba'ath Party came to power in the 1960s with U.S. support, carried out a program of "Arabization," in which Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians were driven from the oil-producing regions around Mosul and Kirkuk. Today there are 300-400,000 displaced Kurds who wish to return to their homes in Kurdistan. A PUK commander in Kirkuk province declared: "We want it orderly, but the Arab settlers must go."

AP

April 28: Under guns of U.S. military, Iraqis protest U.S. occupation outside Palestine Hotel in Baghdad.



Spartacist 1984 statement "For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!" in Turkish and Kurdish.

Even through the distorting lens of this country's capitalist media, which parrots every lie put out by Washington, one can see the widespread distrust and anger at the U.S. colonial occupation among the Iraqi population. However, one place in Iraq where there are no doubt widespread illusions in the U.S. occupation is among Kurds in Kurdistan. Kurds were a special target of terror by Saddam Hussein—as many as 100,000 are thought to have been massacred—in order to ensure unquestioned control by the Ba'ath regime of the vast oil reserves located in Kurdistan. The petty-bourgeois nationalists at the head of the KDP and the PUK hoped that their alliance with Washington would win them some form of independent rule in Iraqi Kurdistan and a share of the oil. Unfortunately for them, it's not going to work out that way. Washington's claim to act as an ally of the Kurdish people is nothing but cynicism and hypocrisy. The U.S. imperialists—in fact, all the imperialist powers—are dead set against any expression of Kurdish national rights.

The 25 to 30 million Kurdish people in the Near East constitute the largest nation in the world without a state; it stretches from eastern Turkey, through a portion of Syria, across northern Iraq and into Iran (with some Kurds also scattered in the Caucasus). What the imperialists fear—and the local powers as well—is that any serious concession to Kurdish nationalism in Iraq could destabilize the whole oil-rich region by inspiring Kurds in other countries to seek independence. This is especially true of Turkey, which since the mid-1980s has been waging a war of extermination—backed by the U.S. and Germany—against that country's oppressed Kurdish minority and against the Turkish Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Actually they changed their name last year to KADEK, the Congress for Freedom and Democracy—that name tells you a lot about where they're heading politically—but some party leaders have continued to use the initials PKK, which I will do as well in this talk. Some 37,000 people have been killed and several thousand villages in Turkish Kurdistan have been turned into ghost towns. The Turkish bourgeoisie is so intent on stamping out any hint of Kurdish separatism that for years speaking Kurdish in public was outlawed and Kurdish people were officially referred to as "mountain Turks." Today the U.S. invasion of Iraq has prompted the Ankara regime to reimpose a de facto state of emergency in Turkish Kurdistan. Tanks line the streets; cars are pulled over and searched. Many trade unionists and antiwar protesters have been arrested and beaten.

Petty-Bourgeois Nationalism: Dead End for Kurds

Like all petty-bourgeois nationalists, the KDP and PUK have a long history of looking for allies among the local capitalist powers and their imperialist godfathers. To see where this strategy gets you, take a look at the Palestinians. Under the leadership of the petty-bourgeois nationalists of the PLO, even the politically sophisticated Palestinian people have been simply led from one massacre to another—not just by the racist Zionist butchers but also by supposed allies like the king of Jordan. Today, even as the Zionists gun down Palestinians on a daily basis, the PLO acts as their police auxiliaries in the Occupied Territories.

As evidence of Washington's good graces, Kurdish leaders point to the fact that since the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan has been essentially autonomous as a result of the "no fly zone" in the north of the country enforced by U.S. warplanes. Actually, that experience could serve as a textbook example of how petty-bourgeois nationalism adds up to betrayal and defeat. After siding with the U.S. in the 1991 war against Iraq, the KDP and the PUK launched an uprising at the call of the CIA's "Voice of Free Iraq." But the promised aid from Washington never materialized and the Kurdish nationalists were left to the tender mercies of Saddam Hussein, who drove hundreds of thousands of Kurds from their homes. The KDP and PUK leaders then looked to Turkey for support, helping to hunt down and kill Turkish PKK militants who had sought refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan. By the mid '90s the KDP and PUK were at each other's throats over how to divvy up the profits from smuggling Iraqi oil to Turkey. The PUK got Iran to send in troops on its side, so the KDP invited Saddam Hussein to send in his tanks, turning the dirty nationalist feud into a renewed war between Iran and Iraq, paid for with Kurdish blood.

And the decade of the 1990s was merely the most recent chapter in the long history of petty-bourgeois Kurdish nationalists sacrificing the Kurdish national struggle for illusory support from the imperialists or their regional lackeys, who invariably end up dumping the nationalist leaders and slaughtering their people. The KDP was formed in 1946 by Mullah Mustafa Barzani, the embodiment of the treachery visited upon the Kurdish people by their supposed leaders. Barzani started his political career during WWII pledging blind obedience to the British, "whatever your orders may be" (David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* [1996]). The British responded by driving Barzani and his followers out of Iraq. When a revolutionary wave swept Iraq in 1958, Barzani launched another Kurdish revolt, but he made an offer to the Ba'ath Party to call a cease-fire if they came to power. The Ba'ath Party took power in a counterrevolutionary coup and profited from Barzani's cease-fire to attack the Kurds.

Barzani then got support from an unholy alliance of the CIA, the Israeli Mossad and the Shah of Iran. In return, Barzani helped the Iranians by holding back the Kurdish struggle in Iran. When leaders of the KDP of Iran finally refused to continue this suicidal policy in 1967, Barzani began hunting them down and turning them over to the Shah. One of them was executed by Barzani and then handed over to the Iranians, who publicly displayed the body in towns throughout Iranian Kurdistan as a warning to others.

Meanwhile, in 1979 the Iranian KDP hailed Khomeini's so-called Islamic Revolution. They weren't alone, by the way. Virtually the entire left internationally, except our tendency, hailed Khomeini. The reformist Socialist Workers Party in this country is currently running a three-part series in the *Militant* holding up the so-called Islamic Revolution in Iran as an

example of anti-imperialist struggle. To get an idea of what it meant for the left to support Khomeini, imagine if Osama bin Laden and the guys who flew those planes into the World Trade Center took state power. You get the picture? The International Socialist Organization (ISO) hailed Khomeini's Islamic Revolution with the headline: "The Form, Religious—The Spirit, Revolution" (*Socialist Worker*, January 1979). They went on to hail the *mujahedin* who fought with the CIA against the Red Army in Afghanistan. This pamphlet that the ISO sells on its lit tables, *The Prophet and the Proletariat*, explains how reactionary Islamic fundamentalists like the cutthroats in Algeria who murder unveiled women are actually "anti-imperialists." In Iranian Kurdistan, the groups who came together to form the Komala/Communist Party of Iran also supported the mullahs. Khomeini wasted no time in turning on his leftist and Kurdish supporters, slaughtering some 30,000 Kurds by early 1984.

During the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88, the KDP got support from Iran while the PUK, which had split off a few years previously, made a cease-fire deal with Saddam Hussein. But in 1983, the fortunes of the Kurds changed radically because Saddam Hussein got a visit from a U.S. envoy—none other than today's defense minister, Donald Rumsfeld—who informed him that the U.S. was going to throw its support to him against Iran. Now, with arms and other assistance pouring in from the U.S. and Europe—including the technology to develop poison gas and biological weapons—Hussein felt strong enough to move against the PUK and the Kurdish population. The PUK responded by joining a united military front with the KDP and the Iranian army, which drove deep into Iraqi Kurdistan. Hussein responded by launching air bombardment and poison gas attacks, killing Kurdish civilians by the thousands.

Now, that's a pretty sordid litany of betrayals, but I subjected you to it to make a political point. I gave a talk in Paris a few months ago on the Near East—it was published recently in *Workers Vanguard* (see "A Marxist Perspective on the Near East," *WV* No. 799, 14 March)—in which I emphasized that the Palestinian people can only achieve liberation from the terrible oppression they suffer under the Zionist jackboot if they ally their struggle with that of the working class in the surrounding Arab countries and in Israel itself. The same can be said with regard to the Kurds. It is obvious on the face of it that to win independence for the entire Kurdish nation would require the revolutionary destruction of at least four capitalist regimes—and accompanying imperialist domination—right across this strategically important region. That's what we mean by the slogan of a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan—a united independent Kurdistan could only come about through the struggle for proletarian revolution.

That means that the motor force for the struggle for Kurdish independence is to be found in the proletariats of the countries which oppress the Kurds—the Arab, Persian and Turkish proletariats. They, in turn, must be won to actively

Lee/NY Times

February 26: Kurdish students in Sulaimaniya, Iraq, burn Turkish flag to protest threatened Turkish intervention on eve of U.S. invasion.

championing the Kurdish right of self-determination. There is no other way that one can even imagine achieving the democratic right of national self-determination for the Kurdish people. Within the nationalist framework, it's not even conceivable on an abstract level. Which is why Kurdish nationalist organizations almost never even raise the call for independence of the entire Kurdish nation. Instead, they call for things like "autonomy" for the particular piece of territory that's located in the country they're in—"federalism" for Iraqi Kurdistan is what the KDP and PUK appear to be calling for today.

The PKK and the Kurdish Question in Turkey

Unlike the other Kurdish groups, the PKK has won mass support not only among the rural population of Turkish Kurdistan but among workers in West Turkey, West Europe and elsewhere. But the PKK nationalists see the proletariat as just another sector of the "people" to be used as a means of pressuring the Ankara regime, or the Social Democrats in Germany, to grant concessions. The PKK emphatically rejects the perspective of independently mobilizing the proletariat to lead all the oppressed to carry out a socialist revolution in the Near East and in the advanced capitalist countries. Consequently, they have ended up making increasingly abject overtures to the arch-enemies of Kurdish freedom, the Western imperialists and the Turkish state. In the past, the PKK has made repeated calls on the UN, the European Union—even the U.S.—to use their good offices to resolve the Kurdish question. After his capture four years ago, PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan called on his supporters to lay down their arms.

Today, the PKK has gone so far as to embrace the U.S. colonial occupation of Iraq! The *Financial Times* (15 April) reported that a PKK leader "said the movement had shelved its ambitions for a unified state for all Kurds" and now "wants to establish a dialogue with Washington on joining its campaign of democratisation in the Middle East." A 25 April English-language posting on the "Kurdish Observer" Web site quotes a KADEK (PKK) statement as follows: "The [U.S.] intervention will be successful only if it paves the way for improving the common values of humanity.... Therefore for [the] USA the only way is to give [an] opportunity to democratic regimes to be establish[ed] and support them." The PKK's long list of democratic demands that follows that quote does not even hint at calling for the withdrawal of U.S. and other imperialist forces from the Near East—which is not surprising since the PKK looks to the imperialists as the instrument for implementing their program!

The Worker-Communist Party of Iraq/Iran (WCPI), which we intersect particularly in Canada but which has a certain base in Iraqi and Iranian Kurdistan, also published a list of democratic demands they want to see implemented in Iraq (*WPI Briefing*, 28 April). Typically for them, they simply ignore the Kurdish question. And to whom do they look to implement their demands? The WCPI calls for the withdrawal of U.S. and British forces but wants them replaced by "the intervention of the United Nations" to "safeguard free and secure conditions." From the Korean War of 1950-53 to the 1991 Persian Gulf War against Iraq, the UN is nothing but an instrument serving the interests of the great imperialist powers. The Iraqi people were starved by 12 years of economic sanctions imposed by the UN, they were bombed almost daily by U.S. warplanes operating in the "no fly zones," and UN weapons inspectors spied on Iraq and helped ensure it was as defenseless as possible in the face of the U.S. onslaught. Now the WCPI looks to the UN to bring democracy to Iraq!

During the Cold War, when the Soviet Union faced hostile encirclement by the imperialist countries, petty-bourgeois nationalist forces like the PLO or the South African ANC were often politically and militarily backed by Moscow, giving them some room to maneuver. The PKK got a modicum of military support from Soviet-friendly Syria. After the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, however, the petty-bourgeois nationalists were left suspended in mid-air. The PLO responded by looking ever more closely to Washington to broker a deal, which has not relieved the suffering of the Palestinians one iota. In South Africa, the now bourgeois-nationalist ANC presides over a system of neo-apartheid in which the black masses are just as exploited and oppressed—by the same white ruling class—as they were under apartheid. In the very unlikely event that the PKK ever succeeded in cutting a deal with the Turkish bourgeoisie, it would simply use its new position of authority to exploit its own people and serve as Kurdish gendarmes for the Turkish state. That's the program of petty-bourgeois nationalism.

There is plenty of historical experience to show that our perspective of united class struggle by the multinational proletariat in the Near East is not simply a pipe-dream. We ran a two-part article in *WV* Nos. 740 and 741 (25 August and 8 September 2000) which I would recommend in this regard; it shows the rich tradition of proletarian class struggle in the Near East in the decade and a half following WWII and gives an idea of the enormous possibilities this held out for national and ethnic minorities as well as women.

One example of united class struggle not dealt with in that article was shown in 1991 when 48,000 coal miners in the Turkish city of Zonguldak went on strike at the very moment that the Turkish government was gearing up for the U.S.-led assault on Iraq. The strike went beyond economic issues by demanding "No to the war!" Solidarity strikes occurred in Kurdish eastern Anatolia and among Turkish workers; miners reportedly raised the demand for the right of Kurds to use their own language.

The Kurds are not simply pathetic victims of repeated betrayals, although if you looked only at the history of Kurdish nationalism you might get that impression. There is a sizable Kurdish working class with a history of militant struggle in the oil fields of Kirkuk and other strategic centers. But for the most part the Kurdish proletariat is to be found outside of Kurdistan in such industrial centers as Istanbul and the mining regions of southern Turkey, as well as Baghdad—at least before it was starved by sanctions and bombed to rubble. It is in the urban centers, among the industrial proletariat, that the power exists to lead the Kurdish people to freedom.

Hundreds of thousands more Kurds are dispersed throughout West Europe together with the Turks in the coal mines, metal plants and chemical works of Germany and West Europe. In Germany, tens of thousands of Kurds are members of powerful trade unions together with their German and Turkish class brothers and sisters. Throughout Europe, immigrant workers have been the target of racist campaigns launched by the "left" no less than right-wing governments, seeking to use racism to divide the working class and demoralize it. When a cargo ship loaded with 900 Kurdish refugees ran aground off southern France two years ago, the popular-front coalition government at the time composed of Socialists, Communists and Greens threw all the Kurdish refugees into concentration camps guarded by the army. Turkish leftist and Kurdish nationalist groups, including the PKK, are banned in Germany. Even after two or three generations in the country, many of those of Turkish or Kurdish origin cannot become German citizens under the racist citizenship laws.

Our comrades in France, Germany and elsewhere have insisted on the fact that immigrant workers are a strategic component of the proletariat. We fight for mobilizing the power of labor to block deportations and we fight for full citizenship rights for all. Immigrant workers in Germany and throughout West Europe are a living bridge between the struggle for the emancipation of the Kurds in a socialist Near East and proletarian revolution in imperialist West Europe. The key lies in forging an internationalist leadership modeled on Lenin's Bolshevik Party, which liberated the oppressed nationalities of the tsarist autocracy's "prison house of peoples" by leading the proletariat to power in the 1917 Russian Revolution.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Reza/Sipa

Khomeini's 1979 "Islamic revolution" carried out bloody repression against Kurdish minority in Iran.

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Young Spartacus

Open Letter to Supporters of Direct Action

The following open letter by the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club was issued on May 11.

The end of the war on Iraq and the onset of colonial occupation have spiked the momentum of the reformist-organized liberal peace movement, while driving into inaction many of those who wanted to "Stop the War." In contrast to the dominant "loyal opposition" politics, the Spartacus Youth Club built Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents at antiwar demonstrations based on the fight to

Bay Area SYC

defend Iraq against the U.S. imperialist attack and the struggle to win workers to a program of class struggle against the capitalist rulers. Also repulsed by the servile liberalism of much of the left, a substantial number of activists have been impelled towards the strategy of direct action. In conversations at breakaway marches it's become apparent that we have agreement with some supporters of direct action that the task at hand is not merely to end *this* war, but to end the system behind all wars. Our substantial differences center on the questions of what that system is and how to get rid of it.

Many of those who participate in direct actions argue that the big, docile demonstrations failed unequivocally because one cannot politely ask the government to stop waging war. Instead they assert that antiwar activists must directly challenge the machine that directs the war and occupation. As Direct Action to Stop the War (DASW) states as its goal, "If the government and corporations won't stop the war, we'll shut down the warmakers!" Similarly, the anarchist zine *Slingshot* (Spring 2003) argues to "create increasing levels of chaos and disruption" to force the government to "fight on two fronts at once—one of them right here at home." Some participants in recent direct actions have taken to wearing badges emblazoned with "Uproot the system behind war."

Protests and direct actions have been ongoing since the war started, and, whether in San Francisco intersections, at Chevron headquarters, or at Lockheed Martin, the pattern has been the same: protesters sit down, police cut through their lock boxes and cart them away to be cited and released. But the demonstration at the Oakland port on April 7, called to protest APL, a shipping company that transports military cargo, fell victim to an egregiously violent response from the Oakland police, who injured nine dockworkers and dozens of protesters, including two Spartacist supporters. So what was decisively different about this rally? It did not immediately threaten the transport of war material, since APL was not scheduled to move any cargo that day. Nor does the matter reduce to the particular brutality of the Oakland police, who at a rally in Oakland two days earlier had refrained from a single violent confrontation.

AP

Surrounded by cops, protesters against Iraq war "disrupt" San Francisco intersection. Despite their greater militancy, direct action supporters share liberals' strategy of appealing to the rulers to be more humane.

Hafalia/SF Chronicle

Police open fire on direct action antiwar protesters at Port of Oakland, April 7.

What makes the Port of Oakland fundamentally different from any corporate headquarters is its role as a vital link in the chain of *capitalist production*, where capitalist exploitation occurs in its rawest form, and thus where profit is generated. The capitalists harbor an ultimate fear that this chain might be broken by organized workers stopping work as a political act; the cops' deliberate targeting of this protest had the character of a pre-emptive strike against any potential union action. The power to shut down production and bring the whole economic system to a grinding halt invests workers with inordinate social power vastly out of proportion to their numbers. This is effectively ignored by direct action activists blockading and otherwise disrupting corporate headquarters—inasmuch as such actions do not stop the flow of profits (there is no production in suburban corporate offices) it can only be a mere annoyance to the capitalist bosses.

The police attack of April 7 underscores the role of the state in enforcing the capitalist order, thus illustrating in high resolution the inner workings of the capitalist system behind this and all imperialist wars. The shipping companies, the Oakland city government and the police all colluded well before April 7 to premeditate the cop riot, going so far as to reserve space in a port railyard to serve as a temporary cop command center, where company officials worked alongside police. Far from being an extreme incident, this collusion reflects the normal functioning of capitalist class society, where the state exists not as some neutral institution too often occupied by administrations with sundry corporate connections, but as the executive committee of the ruling class. Although governments can be venal and bloodthirsty to different degrees, they nevertheless exist to administer the capitalist state, whose sole function is to ensure the political dictatorship of the capitalist class and to safeguard the system of class exploitation.

The present international imperialist order—where advanced capitalist nation-states vie for mutually advantageous positions of economic and political hegemony in a conflict militarily dominated by the U.S.—is a product of the development of capitalist society in an era when capitalists, having thoroughly plundered their own countries, turn to the rest of the world for profit. It's vital to understand that the deadly military ventures in the service of profits, the impoverishment of working people in favor of military spending and corporate payoffs, the subordination of the so-called "third world" to the industrialized world, are not the result of some imperialist *policy*, but inalienable features of modern capitalism itself—the imperialist *system*. While this may seem evident, it is implicitly denied by the direct action strategy of targeting "corporate and government power" (in the words of DASW), a perspective rooted in anti-globalization ideology. In this view, poverty and war do not result from the capitalist system itself, but from malfeasant, overgrown corporations and an "undemocratic" clique in Washington that simply refuses to listen to reason. This opens the door to all kinds of "solutions," from seeking to rid the world of the IMF or WTO to blockading corporate headquarters, that are based on the illusion that imperialism is a policy that can be reformed rather than a system that must be smashed.

Direct action supporters offer a range of explanations of how direct action can "unplug the war machine at its roots." DASW states that its goal is partly to "raise the economic, social and political costs of waging this war, and continue to stop business as usual until the war stops." Street occupations are considered as "clogging the arteries" of the system, forcing change. Some argue that only an effort to "take democracy to the streets" can reverse the trend against civil liberties and for war. Others paint the problem as a system of hegemony that must be answered with an assertion of freedom involving personal sacrifice—as stated by Joshua Clover, a participant in the April 7 action. "It's about stating, in terms that cannot be ignored, that one's freedom is not assigned by the guys with the guns" (*Village Voice*, April 16-22).

A seemingly more radical, but fundamentally equivalent perspective, raised by some anarchists at breakaway marches and direct actions, is the slogan "No War but the Class War." But what is meant by "class struggle" is something akin to what has transpired thus far on the streets of San Francisco and the driveways of corporations, reducing the term to mean the rebellion of the disenfranchised and discontented against the privileged, the powerful, and the cops. *This is not class war.* In fact, these explanations are all different variants of a strategy of putting pressure, *militant* pressure, on the corporations (the "war profiteers") and the government (the "warmakers") to stop the war. DASW makes this explicit in a rather sad appeal to SF mayor Willie Brown, asking that "instead of castigating the demonstrators...[he] join us in opposing the war profiteers who do business in San Francisco." A similar thrust is evident in more recent efforts to redress the April 7 attack by way of an "independent investigation" and a sufficiently diverse Citizens Police Review Board. But this operates on the illusion that the cops, an integral part of the capitalist state, can be reformed away from their mission of enforcing capitalist law and order. While the idea of reforming the police may not be pushed by all

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direct action supporters, the fact remains that direct action reduces to the idea that if only the system's everyday functioning could be disrupted and destabilized enough, the rulers would have no choice but to accede to our demands.

Thus, in a fundamental way, there is a congruence between the strategy of the liberal peace movement—pushed by the craven reformists of the ISO, ANSWER/WWP, RCP/NION, etc.—which begs the capitalists to be nicer to the people of the world, and the program of direct action advocates. They each seek in their own way to pressure the rulers to cease their imperialist aggression. A break from liberal docility does not in itself represent a break from the liberal program of capitalist reform. A strategy looking to the ruling class itself as the instrumentality for change (in this case, through militant pressure) is incapable of overthrowing the ruling class. And the political consequence of looking to the rulers, however indirectly, is to deflect focus from the system of capitalism itself, therefore standing as an obstacle to effective struggle against American imperialism. The problem, of course, is that as long as capitalism is around, we'll continue to suffer through imperialist wars.

Workers, in a position where what they produce is appropriated by the capitalists for their own individual profit, have a unique historic interest in eliminating capitalist exploitation by overthrowing capitalist property relations. This renders the working class the *only* force with the potential power to smash capitalism. The real meaning of class war lies precisely in the mobilization of workers to that end. The only means to mobilizing such power is to fight against the false consciousness perpetuated by their present misleadership and win workers to a revolutionary *program*.

Protesters are to be commended for bringing an antiwar message to the ports, but the fact remains that nothing was shut down as a result of the protest. An instance of real class struggle would have come about if the dockworkers had taken the elementary step of shutting down the port in response to the cop attack. This did not happen. Why? Because their union, the ILWU, is misled by a bureaucracy whose allegiance is to the capitalist order. An illustration of this was the union leaders' determination to load military cargo last fall, thus facilitating the war drive against Iraq, even as the union was locked out by the shippers and under threat of government attack.

Any talk of class war or revolutionary struggle is utterly empty outside of a perspective that seeks to mobilize the social power of labor in a revolutionary direction. In the context of imperialist war, a central aspect in the struggle for revolutionary consciousness is the fight to rally the working class actively against the capitalist warmakers. That was the content of our fight for workers to take up the defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack without offering the slightest bit of political support to Saddam Hussein, a position rejected by many anarchists. The most favorable outcome for the working and oppressed masses of the world in the recent conflict (and those looming ahead) would have been the defeat of U.S. imperialism. American workers could contribute to such a defeat only insofar as they employ class struggle tactics against American imperialism at home in siding with those in Iraq fighting against the invaders. Any refusal to fight for the defense of Iraq is nothing other than a capitulation to those whose "opposition" to war is subordinate to allegiance to the American ruling class—for example, those who preach that "peace is patriotic" or those who hail the "antiwar" Democrats that fight for American imperialist interests every bit as much as the Republicans.

To win workers to a class struggle perspective it is necessary to draw the direct connection between the rulers' war on Iraq, their "war on terror" and the bipartisan attack on labor, blacks and immigrants. A concrete example is our recent campaign for union defense, in the Bay Area and elsewhere, of those activists arrested protesting the war. In advancing this campaign, we sought to win labor to take a side in the war. It is incumbent upon revolutionaries to tell the truth, to illuminate to the workers all of the malignancies of American capitalism—its inherent need for war, unemployment, poverty; its dependence upon women's subordination to the patriarchal family; its natural interest in restricting the level of mass education and culture. Our task is to organize workers to fight these malignancies.

Young Spartacus

UC Berkeley, April 12: At united-front protest against ROTC military recruiters, SYC calls for break with Democratic Party of racism and war.

In mobilizing the multiracial American working class, especially the heavily black longshore union, the question of black oppression is central. This country has depended on black oppression from its inception, and the legacy of slavery, most obviously expressed today in the criminalization of the black population by the "war on drugs" and "war on crime," persists as a central characteristic of American class society. Black oppression is the bedrock of American capitalism. It is the crucial mechanism of the capitalists' divide and conquer strategy for domination over the whole of the working class. The multiracial working class cannot be mobilized in pursuit of its historic tasks unless it transcends racial and other divisions *in united class struggle* against black oppression and the capitalist order that sanctifies it. On the docks, given that many of the non-union port truckers are immigrants, this makes it necessary to struggle to organize port truckers and fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. There can be no class struggle as long as black oppression is not confronted head on—any silence on this question, which has been the rule at the recent antiwar demonstrations and direct actions, is a way of adapting to and reinforcing the existing consciousness with which the working class is bound to capitalism.

In this country at this time, the primary obstacle to a revolutionary working class lies in illusions of a commonality of interests between the workers and their exploiters. In the unions this is fomented by the misleaders' promotion of the Democratic Party as the "friends of labor." Democrats are continually pushed as a lesser evil, and union leaders have in the recent past cozied up to liberal Oakland mayor Jerry Brown, who repaid their support with projectiles. It is necessary to drive home the point that what's wrong with the Democrats is not so much that they generally advocate anti-working-class policies, but that they necessarily oppose workers' interests because they are a party of capitalism, of the class enemy. On February 9, 2002, a demonstration initiated by fraternal groups of the Spartacist League, and built in part by the Spartacus Youth Club, rallied workers, including ILWU locals 10 and 6, to take up the defense of immigrant rights and protest against the U.S. government's attacks on working people. In a real way, this demonstration was the first that pierced through the "national unity" patriotism predominant since September 11, serving to advance working class consciousness by organizing an action where workers united across racial lines against their common class enemy. It's not a small point that it took the leadership of a revolutionary party to do this.

Bancroft Library

Strike by longshoremen and seamen in 1934 shut down port, sparked San Francisco general strike. Unleashing power of labor requires class-struggle leadership of unions.

To break the chains binding workers to their oppressors will not always be flashy work. It entails taking every opportunity to point out the nature of the Democrats as a party of capitalism, racism and war. It takes persistent arguments among rank and file workers, and especially common action in struggle, for a clean break from the Democrats in favor of the political independence of the working class. And it will take a political fight against the bureaucratic union misleaders, the labor lieutenants of capital. Yet many on the left uncritically participated in the Democrat-sponsored antiwar rally on April 5 in Oakland, practically a get-out-the-vote rally for Barbara Lee, which was also endorsed by the ILWU. Tolerance of this class collaborationism only serves to cement labor's chains to the capitalist system! The Spartacus Youth Club intervened at the rally noting that the only quarrel with the war on Iraq of Barbara Lee and other "antiwar" Democrats was that it lacked the fig leaf of UN participation. We also actively fought for the defense of Iraq with placards and in arguments. Spartacist supporters at the April 7 action carried a sign saying "Break with the Democrats! Build a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!"

DASW's open letter "To the People Who Live and Work in the City of San Francisco" expresses the direct action ideal of non-hierarchical organization: "We don't all subscribe to any one philosophy, and we certainly don't all think alike, nor do we have leaders." The idea that leadership is inherently undemocratic and therefore oppressive is basic to the outlook of anarchists. In the first place, on an organizational level, nothing happens without initiative; as long as action is being taken and ideas are being fought for, then a leadership is at work. And if that leadership is not *consciously* revolutionary, then the net effect can only be the perpetuation of bourgeois ideology and the capitalist system itself. It is manifestly evident that the working class has a leadership, the pro-Democratic union officialdom, that ties it to the capitalist order. This is recognized by all. Essentially, direct action, and the anarchist ideology it borrows from, offers "democracy in action" and "affinity groups" as a substitute for a concrete strategy (i.e., a program) to overthrow capitalist rule, which requires breaking the working class from its chauvinist leadership. Putting forward "no leadership" as the alternative to misleadership is nothing but a concession to the stranglehold of bourgeois ideology, mediated through the trade union leaders and the Democrats, on workers, blacks, immigrants and all the oppressed.

The point is that direct action, though avowedly radical, has no possibility of ending capitalist war because it contains no perspective of mobilizing real social power in struggle to end capitalism. What's needed is a concerted multiracial force, democratic in decision-making but centralized and decisive in action, that fights to win the working class not just to particular positions (e.g., "No War on Iraq" or "Defend Civil Liberties") but to a program of revolutionary struggle against exploitation and all forms of oppression, to rally and lead the other oppressed sectors of society in an irreconcilable struggle to overturn capitalism and build a socialist society. Anarchists may bristle at the words, but this requires a revolutionary vanguard party. The fight for such a party is the task ahead of the communists of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs, who struggle toward a time when all revolutionaries unite on the basis of a common program to defend and extend what comrades of the past have won and to drive forward in the fight to eliminate capitalism and its imperialist wars once and for all.■

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Ireland...

(continued from page 3)

no more than €128 million (and much of that in the form of property already transferred to church-controlled charities!), while the total bill is likely to be between €500 million and €1 billion. Thus, through our taxes the working class will end up paying for the church's crimes! A particularly surreal example of the clericalist nature of the state was the mobilisation of the Irish Army in Spring 2001 to escort the alleged "sacred relics" of St. Therese of Lisieux around the country in a primitive ritual at the behest of the church. *For the separation of church and state!*

Catholicism has been one of the main defining aspects of Irish nationalism: historically, it was religion, more so than language or racial differences, which distinguished the Irish from their British colonial overlords. Religious reaction and sectarian division are key to the maintenance of capitalist exploitation and oppression throughout Ireland. The identification of religion with national identity was deliberately encouraged by the Irish bourgeoisie after independence in order to tie the working class to their exploiters and to regiment the population with reactionary ideology, of which anti-communism was no small part. Thus, DeValera's 1937 constitution enshrined the church's "special position" in Article 44 (repealed only in 1972). The government considers itself entitled to deport the immigrant parents of children who are Irish citizens, thus tearing families apart when it suits the state, and this position was recently upheld by the Supreme Court. We demand *full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No departations!*

no credit

Dublin, 1950s: Women from Gloucester Street Refuge escorted by cops during Corpus Chrisli religious procession. "Fallen women" were often forced by Catholic church and Irish state into seclusion.

Catholic Nationalism and Labourite Reformism

The Catholic nationalism of the Irish bourgeoisie is brought into the working class by the pro-capitalist Labour Party and trade-union bureaucracy. For decades Labour leaders were members of the sinister Knights of Columbanus. In the early 1950s, Minister for Health Noël Browne attempted to introduce a limited free health programme for children and pregnant women, the Mother and Child Scheme. This provoked outrage from the bishops and the church-run medical establishment. As Browne describes in his autohiography *Against the Tide*, Archbishop John Charles McQuaid "considered the health scheme an encroachment by the state on the church's role, which he considered to be, among much else, 'to determine and to control the social attitudes of the family in the Republic, especially in the delicate matters of maternity and sexuality'." Within months the church crushed the scheme and Browne was bounded out of the government. Labour Party leader William Norton scandalously sided with the church against Noël Browne and the Mother and Child Scheme. The Irish Trades Union Congress initially supported the Scheme hut retreated once the bishops denounced it. Think Lahour has changed? On the question of ahortion, Labour's delegate conference in 2001 passed a motion for the "right to choose," but this position was overturned by the Labour leadership. In the leadership election last year, Eamon Gilmore (who lost) was the only one of the four candidates who claimed to have a "pro-choice" position.

Last year the government carried out a reactionary referendum on abortion, attempting to overturn the X Case. We called for a no vote because if the referendum passed it would have eliminated even the possibility of pregnant women who were suicidal obtaining abortions and it would have emboldened the reactionaries, making the fight for women's rights of any sort more difficult. Even though the referendum was defeated, ahortion is still banned. At the same time, thousands of Irish women continue to travel to Britain at significant expense every year for abortions. And the health of many of these women is endangered by the abortions heing carried out at a later stage of pregnancy.

The main leftist opposition to the referendum was the Alliance for a No Vote (ANV), led by Labour activists like Ivana Bacik and made up of reformists like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Socialist Party and Workers Solidarity Movement. The ANV, taking their cue from Labour, consciously limited their demands to maintenance of the miserable status quo (a woman can theoretically get an abortion if her *life* is in danger...but good luck finding a hospital or clinic to perform one) and obscenely presented this as defending "abortion rights" in Ireland! After the defeat of the referendum, the SWP wrote:

> "We need to keep the pressure on parties such as Labour and Fine Gael to make sure that they make good on their commitment to bring in legislation—legislation that gives a liberal interpretation of the X case judgement and introduces real access to abortion rights for the women who need it."
>
> —*Socialist Worker*, 15-28 March 2002

While the SWP want to pressure the Lahour Party (and the bourgeois Fine Gael no less!) to more "liberally" interpret the restrictive *anti-abortion laws* (as though this is the way to provide "real access to abortion rights"), it is necessary to hreak workers from Labourism and clerical nationalism. Our aim is to bring revolutionary consciousness to the working class, including making workers conscious of the importance of fighting for *free abortion on demand!*

Last year the SWP crawled at the feet of the Lahour Party in the ANV and today they crawl to both Labour and the Catholic bishops as part of the class-collaborationist Irish Anti-War Movement. Just when the prestige of the Catholic hierarchy has hit a low ebb after the recent scandals, the SWP embrace the bishops as supposed opponents of imperialist war and therehy serve to reinforce the ideological chains binding Irish workers and oppressed to the church. In order not to offend the "antiwar" bishops, the SWP recently revised their "Where We Stand" column, *removing* the section which called for "free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians." For the SWP, huilding an alliance with the Catholic bishops, Labour and the Greens is more important than the fight for ahortion rights and against women's oppression.

As we exposed in *Spartacist Ireland* No. 2 (Autumn/Winter 2002), "Socialist Party spits on abortion rights." Socialist Party leader Peter Hadden delended the Socialist Party's councillor in Omagh, Johnny McLaughlin, who voted for an anti-ahortion motion in the council: "We have never insisted on support for a pro-choice position as a condition of membership of our party." Fighting against women's oppression, a strategic question for revolutionaries in Ireland, is of no importance for the Socialist Party.

The *Socialist Worker* review of *The Magdalene Sisters* (7-20 November 2002) further exposes their reformism. While referring to the relationsbip hetween women's oppression and private property and recognising the continued influence of the church in society, the SWP push the fantasy that the clericalist state can be purged of its cruel elements short of a socialist revolution and put forward the example of Portugal. "When the Catholic dictatorship fell in Portugal in 1974, there was a process of sanieamento to clear out all those who were implicated in the cruelty of the regime. We are still in great need of a sanieamento in Ireland."

In fact there was a revolutionary situation in Portugal in 1974, where the working class could have taken power. A revolutionary party was necessary to organise the working class independently of the bourgeoisie and to fight to take power in its own name, for socialist revolution. However, the workers were tied hy their social-democratic and Stalinist misleaders to an alliance (popular front) with the "progressive" bourgeoisie and generals. One result of the blocking of the possibilities for proletarian revolution is that abortion is still hanned in Portugal today. In January 2002 there was a mass trial in Portugal of women accused of being involved with a clandestine abortion clinic. The nurse who ran the clinic was sentenced to eight and a half years in prison. What is needed, in Ireland as in Portugal and elsewhere, is not merely reforming the worst excesses of the Catholic church and the state, but a socialist revolution which sweeps away the whole system of capitalist exploitation and oppression.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The Magdalene laundries were a cruel aberration, but they played a real role in society to reinforce and police the "rules and morals" of the Catholic church and bourgeoisie: that a woman's place is in the family as wife, child bearer and rearer; and that sex, forbidden for the unmarried, is solely for procreation. They provided an example that all those who went against the "morals" of the church would be punished. This is an example of how the church and the capitalist state work hand in hand to keep the working class and oppressed in line.

Organised religion is one of the props of decaying capitalism, diverting discontent away from the real cause of oppression and poverty—the capitalist system of private property—with the promise of a better life after death. Hand in hand with the capitalists and landlords, the churches of many persuasions serve to enforce bourgeois morality, to maintain the subjugation of women in the family, to relegate them to the home and exclude them from participation in political and social life. It also serves to regiment the population as a whole hehind capitalism.

Karl Marx clearly described the role of religion among the oppressed:

> "Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and also the protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.
>
> "The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for their *real* happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions."
>
> —"Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" (1844)

The hold of religion on the Irish working class is so pervasive that while some

> *I was an unmarried girl*
> *I'd just turned twenty-seven*
> *When they sent me to the sisters*
> *For the way men looked at me.*
> *Branded ns a jezebel,*
> *I knew I was not bound for Heaven*
> *I'd be cast in shame*
> *Into the Magdalene laandries.*
>
> * * *
>
> *These bloodless hrides of Jesus,*
> *If they had just once glimpsed their groom,*
> *Then they'd know, nnd they'd drop the stones*
> *Concealed behind their rosnries.*
> *They wilt the grass they walk upon.*
> *They leech the light out af a room.*
> *They'd like to drive us down the drnin*
> *At the Magdnlene Laundries*
>
> —*From "The Magdalene Laundries" by Joni Mitchell*

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@liac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Tues. 6:30-8:30 p.m.
and Sat. 1-5 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

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Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

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Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Uncounted Dead

> "Our boys were sent off to die with beautiful ideals painted in front of them. No one told them that dollars and cents were the real reason they were marching off to kill and die."
>
> —Gen. Smedley Butler, 1934

It is easy for millions of Americans to believe that the Iraq war, or for that matter, any other war this century, was fought for high-sounding ideals, like freedom and democracy.

It is easy. Yet it is wrong.

In the earlier half of the 20th Century, when the U.S. invaded the Philippines, it proclaimed its duty as bringing "civilization" to the benighted peoples of the islands. There, Filipino rebels were waging an independence war against the Spaniards and were on the verge of winning their freedom. Lo and behold, the U.S. stepped in, and proclaimed that they too were on the side of "freedom." Spain, reading the handwriting on the wall, rather quickly capitulated. Under the fog of "freedom," however, lay other motives, ones expressed openly by Indiana Senator Albert Beveridge, who announced:

> "The Philippines are ours forever...and just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets.... The Pacific is our ocean."
>
> [Source: Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (1995), p. 306.]

The Filipinos clearly had other ideas, for they had just ended a war for independence, after all, with one waning empire. They were in no mood to join another. But the Americans, using their media and their politicians to promote "civilization" as their "mission," brought in troops, who were ordered to "Burn all and kill all." The U.S. military killed over 600,000 Filipinos to "civilize" them. The great American novelist, Mark Twain, so outraged by the American actions there, joined the Anti-Imperialist League, became its Vice-President, and would later exclaim:

> "I have seen that we do not intend to free but to subjugate the Philippines and so I am an anti-imperialist. I am opposed to having the eagle put its talons on any other land.... I have a strong aversion to sending our bright boys out there to fight with a disgraced musket under a polluted flag."
>
> [Source: Philip Foner, *Mark Twain: Social Critic* (1958), p. 260.]

For decades the U.S. supported the corrupt and brutal Marcos Regime in Manila, where freedom was a joke and democracy an illusion. It took a broad rebellion by Filipinos to remove him from power.

The native dead from the Vietnam War rarely enters American debate, even though some 2,000,000 men, women and children lost their lives. When U.S.-backed dictatorships unleashed their CIA-trained death squads on their own people, killing hundreds of thousands since the 1970s in Central America, who among us bothered to even count these peasants? When the U.S. bombed its way into Panama in 1989 to remove Noriega (and install their own kleptocracy), thousands of Panamanians were slain during the invasion. How many? The U.S. hadn't bothered to count.

During the first Gulf War, in '91, the U.S. killed an estimated 150,000 Iraqis. But like the Panamanians, the Central Americans, the Filipinos before them, they were faceless, nameless, and largely forgotten. In U.S. military parlance, they are "collateral damage."

So too, the bombing campaign of the most recent Iraqi war was brought to you by Raytheon, and Lockheed, and the imperial press corps, complete with uniforms. They can tell you how many bombs were dropped, where they were dropped, indeed how much each bomb weighed and cost. Yet who they hit, and how many they killed is not news. As non-Westerners, as nonwhites, they are expendable; forgettable.

Do you really think that there will be a "democratic" Iraq?

What if a majority of Iraqis want to found an Islamic state? The U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld had already announced that such a polity would be "unacceptable." "Democracy" thus may really mean, "do what the Americans want you to do." For the better part of a century, the words, "democracy," "civilization," and "freedom" have been code words for something else indeed. They have been code words for Empire. And what *is* Empire? It is the looting and exploitation of the world for profit. Let us return briefly to Sen. Beveridge for the flavor of the Philippines invasion and slaughter, to reflect the real reasons for that war, as well as an inkling of the latest invasion of Iraq:

> "...The Philippines give us a base at the door of all the East... No land in America surpasses in fertility the plains and valleys of Luzon. Rice and coffee, sugar and coconuts, hemp and tobacco.... The wood of the Philippines can supply the furniture of the world for a century to come. At Cebu the best informed man on the island told me that 40 miles of Cebu's mountain chain are practically mountains of coal....
>
> "My own belief is that there are not 100 men among them who comprehend what Anglo-Saxon self-government even means, and there are over 5,000,000 people to be governed.
>
> "It has been charged that our conduct of the war has been cruel. Senators, it has been the reverse... Senators must remember that we are not dealing with Americans or Europeans. We are dealing with Orientals."
>
> [Source: Zinn, p. 306]

This greed, this pervasive racism fueled American colonialism at the beginning of the 20th century.

Unfortunately, if you look far enough, it is with us still.

27 April 2003

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Send urgently needed contributions for Mumia's legal defense, made payable to "SEE Mumia Free," to: Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

people who suffered in the Magdalene laundries and "industrial schools" rejected religion, many continued to cling to their faith.

Women's oppression is rooted in the institution of the family and is a feature of all class societies. Friedrich Engels explained in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) that the development of patriarchy "was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and became a mere instrument for the production of children." The family is a key social unit for the maintenance of capitalism. For the capitalists the family provides the basis for passing on accumulated wealth, to raise the next generation of workers and to instil conservative social values and obedience to authority. It is the family—and the necessity to enforce monogamy on women to ensure that the man knows who his real heir is—which generates the "morality" codified in and reinforced by religion. As Peter Mullan noted to the Italian leftist newspaper *Il Manifesto* (8 August 2002), "The Catholic Church is not that different from the Taliban. It seems that every religion considers their enemy the young women, their sexuality, their vitality, maybe because they break the rules of patriarchal society." The Protestant fundamentalists in Northern Ireland vie with the Catholic church in reaction: the British 1967 act decriminalising abortion does not apply in Northern Ireland.

We fight to raise the consciousness of the working class to see the need to fight against all oppression—to build a Leninist party, a tribune of the people. Decisions about whether to marry or not, to have children or not or who one sleeps with are individual matters and none of the government's business. ***State out of the bedroom! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! For a free secular health service and free abortion on demand***, so that working-class and poor women who don't have the money can have abortions.

For women to be liberated it is necessary to overthrow the capitalist system of private property and establish a socialist, planned economy. We look to the example of the Russian Revolution of 1917 led by the Bolsheviks. The very first pieces of legislation enacted by the new Soviet government were directed at the emancipation of women: women were given the right to vote; abortion and divorce were legalised and the power of the church to control marriages, legitimise births, etc. was abolished. Insofar as they were able under the conditions of poverty, inherited social backwardness and civil war, the Bolsheviks strove towards the replacement of the nuclear family as a social/economic unit by the socialisation of household labour. They established communal dining rooms, laundries and childcare facilities and promoted the equalisation of educational and vocational opportunities.

Many of the gains were reversed following the Stalinist political counterrevolution in 1924, but the gains provided by the existence of the collectivised economy could be seen in the vital statistics in the Soviet republics in the 1970s compared to Afghanistan on the other side of the border. On the Soviet side, women were no longer imprisoned in the veil, they were literate; on the Afghan side of the border they were largely illiterate and the statistics for infant mortality and life expectancy were dramatically different on the two sides of the frontier. With capitalist counterrevolution all the old crap has returned to the former Soviet republics, where women are the first and foremost victims of the economic devastation and political reaction which accompany capitalist restoration. Only the proletariat organised as the ruling class will begin to avenge the many victims of the Magdalene laundries, as well as the untold numbers of victims of the various churches and the capitalist system of exploitation, and provide a material basis for the full liberation of women. ■

NYC...

(continued from page 12)

As we wrote in our leaflet issued following the February 2000 acquittal of the cops who killed Amadou Diallo, "There will be no end to police brutality short of the destruction of the system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression which the cops serve as armed guard dogs." It is the multiracial American working class that has the power to shatter the bloody rule of the most violent ruling class in history. ***Those who labor must rule!***

There is, however, a roadblock on the way to this fight for workers power. The existing pro-capitalist union bureaucracy's role has been to maintain exploitation and oppression by the ruling class, which controls the wealth of this society that is produced by the blood and sweat of the working masses. Thus the union *mis*leadership seeks to divert any struggle and outrage against the current and previous rounds of layoffs, cutbacks and tax increases. What the TWU's [Transport Workers Union] Roger Toussaint, the UFT's [United Federation of Teachers] Randi Weingarten, DC 37's Lillian Roberts and other labor bureaucrats all have in store are more calls for "reforming" the racist NYPD and pleas to vote Democrats into office in the next elections. This is echoed by black politicians like Al Sharpton, who, when the city seethed with anger over the cop killing of Amadou Diallo in 1999, rushed to divert this justified anger into building illusions that this inherently oppressive capitalist police system can be reformed.

The Labor Black League champions the cause of *all* the oppressed. The "war on drugs" is a war on black people, minorities and the poor; we call for the decriminalization of all drugs. Along with the Partisan Defense Committee, we have organized militant, integrated labor-centered mobilizations in defense of black, immigrant and union rights and successfully stopped the race-terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan from holding recruitment rallies here in New York in October 1999 and other major cities. We've also participated along with the Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth Club in citywide protests against cop terror and helped build Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents in defense of Iraq in the recent mass antiwar demonstrations.

Our job is to finish the unfinished business of the American Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution! The killing of Alberta Spruill and other victims of cop terror is not an aberration but standard operating procedure for the thugs in blue; concussion grenades similar to those that killed Alberta were also used against antiwar protesters and longshoremen on the Oakland docks a few weeks ago. The cops' sole purpose is to terrorize minorities and working people and increase the repressive powers of the capitalist state. Working people need a party that is based on a program of class struggle—the understanding that the interests of the working class are irreconcilably counterposed to those of the capitalist class exploiters and their political parties, be they Democrats or Republicans. ***Build a workers party to fight for a workers government!*** ■

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

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France...

(continued from page 12)

strengthened the hand of the bourgeois state to launch a murderous rampage with thousands of soldiers in the Ivory Coast, troops Chirac now threatens to send to Congo. At home the government used national unity to increase its racist war on immigrants with the first "charter flights" of deportations in many years. Emboldened by its success in trampling over the rights of Africans at home and abroad, the capitalist ruling class now has the organized trade-union movement in its cross hairs.

This is the biggest strike wave in this country since the powerful December 1995 strike against the attack on pensions by the Gaullist government of Juppé. It is crucial that the working class draw the lessons of 1995. The strikes then did force the right-wing government to withdraw its attack, but this was channeled into bringing to power the Jospin popular front in 1997, where the CP and SP ruled in alliance with the capitalist Chevènementistes [followers of ultra-chauvinist politician Jean-Pierre Chevènement] and Greens. Like all popular fronts—governmental alliances between workers parties and capitalist parties which rule on behalf of capital—this one did its job in attacking the interests of the workers and serving those of the capitalists and in shifting the struggles from the factory to parliament. After five years of savage attacks and racist "security campaigns" under Jospin, Le Pen's fascists got a massive vote and the Gaullists came back to power with a vengeance, and with an even more drastic assault on pensions.

Libération

Young women of Muslim origin march in Paris against anti-immigrant repression and for women's rights on International Women's Day, March 8.

Le Bolchévik

Paris: LTF at February 15 antiwar march with banner reading: "Down With Campaign of Racist Terror! For Class Struggle Against the French Capitalists! Defend Iraq Against Imperialist Attack!"

Every gain the government wants to take back today is one the workers movement wrested through hard class struggle. It's going to take more such struggle and a *political* fight to hold on to past conquests and win new ones. Against the sectarian division of the working class we need to unite all the workers as one solid fist: *one industry, one union*. We need solid industry-wide strikes which *shut down production*. The government's challenge that our strikes are "illegal" is an ominous prelude to unleashing the forces of capitalist law and order against strikers and moving in scabs. We need *picket lines which mean "don't cross!"* Government experts whine that we don't understand the demographics and costs of the looming pension and social security crisis. We say, we've created the wealth of this society and we won't pay for the crisis of the inherently unjust capitalist system. The owners who have made millions in profits off our sweat should pay. We demand *a sliding scale of wages and hours: 30 hours work for 40 hours pay!* To combat the "divide and conquer" schemes which pit older workers against youth and French-born against immigrant, we must *organize the unorganized and the unemployed into the unions!* The cutting edge of the government's attempt to fracture the unity of the working class is the toxic anti-immigrant campaign. It is imperative that the union movement take up the defense of its most vulnerable sector, the immigrant workers. We demand: *Stop the deportations! Vigipirote means racist state terror against immigronts! Down with Vigipirate! Full citizenship rights for all immigronts!*

The power of the French proletariat is demonstrated in these massive strikes which have brought France to a halt, paralyzing transportation and disrupting the flow of profits into the bosses' coffers. Our class brothers and sisters in Italy, Greece, Spain, Germany and Britain have also engaged in powerful strikes to defend themselves from ruin. If militancy and self-sacrifice alone were sufficient to combat the injustices of the capitalist system, then all of Europe and indeed the whole world would be a society of justice and equality. Instead it's a world of imperialist war, racism, sexism and attacks on the living standards of the working people by profit-gouging capitalists. The problem is essentially one of leadership. Even to secure the minimal needs of the workers posed by the strike (pensions, wages, employment), the point of departure is a clear understanding that the workers must stand politically independent from and in opposition to their class enemy. This demands a break from the treacherous misleaders who subordinate the workers' interests to the French bourgeoisie, from the misleaders who exploited the unions as their springboard to support Jospin and Chirac. We need to forge *a new, revolutionary, internationalist workers party*. This is what we stand for, as the French section of the International Communist League.

It is not only the spectre of the December 1995 strikes which brought down the Juppé government that haunts the Chirac government. In its wholesale assaults against the teachers unions, the government and its minister of education, Ferry, have been on a rampage to eradicate the "spirit of May '68" in the educational system. This is an ominous threat against women's rights like co-education, abortion and divorce, which were gained in the turbulent years of class struggle that followed the May '68 general strike. The sellout then by the French CP of the pre-revolutionary situation created by that strike immeasurably contributed to re-stabilizing the bourgeois order in West Europe in the early '70s. This in turn helped open the way to the new cold war of the 1980s against the Soviet degenerated workers state, unleashing the forces of capitalist counterrevolution which finally destroyed the USSR in 1991-92. This catastrophic defeat for the world working class ushered in a new world order of interimperialist rivalries and neocolonial wars of depredation, in which the capitalist governments no longer feel constrained to maintain the "welfare state," centrally pensions and health care. To sweep away this capitalist system and to eliminate racism and war, a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party must be built to link together all forms of resistance to immiseration and oppression and to create an egalitarian socialist society here and internationally.

It is notable that in contrast to the December 1995 strikes contingents from the private sector have already come out in protest. However, the strike has remained concentrated in the public sector where the workers have citizenship rights and more protection against layoffs and victimization. This underscores that to bring out the private sector it is vital for the whole proletariat to take up the defense of its more vulnerable class brothers and sisters and their children. That means opposing the racist cops who daily terrorize the ghettos, not having police "unions" obscenely parade in workers demonstrations, as they did on May 13. The cops are not workers but the guard dogs of capitalist private property against any encroachment by the workers on the capitalists' rights to exploit us and oppress minorities. *Cops, prison and security guards, out of the unions!*

Although presently a small organization, the LTF has shown the way in exemplary actions in defense of immigrants. In a statement protesting the deportations, we warned that "this 'war on terror' is designed to marginalize the most vulnerable workers, to weaken the working class by dividing it between European and immigrant, the better to carry out assaults on the *entire* workers movement and its gains wrested through decades of class struggle." We said that the government

> "counts on the time-worn 'divide and conquer' scheme of racism. We better prove them wrong! The powerful trade unions across Europe should stand by their most vulnerable class brothers and sisters. Give every man and woman in the hellish detention centers and squats a union membership card and mobilize the power of the organized working class in their defense!"

Left groups like the LCR who were busy saluting the "antiwar" credentials of the Chirac government did nothing to mobilize against these deportations. Today they are cynically yelling "general strike." A general strike, bringing the country to a grinding halt, poses the question of who shall rule: the workers or the capitalists. With their support for the Gaullist government these treacherous "leftists" have already cast their vote. In contrast, we have fought down the line against the reactionary "national unity" front. During the war we argued for mobilizing the working class in class struggle against the French imperialist rulers as the way to defend Iraq against the neocolonial U.S. imperialist slaughter. We fight to organize the workers movement in this country against the predatory imperialist schemes of this ruling class abroad. *French troops out of Africa! U.S. and allied troops out of the Near East!*

Workers must beware of their present struggles being derailed again into a new popular front. This is the political perspective of the LCR. Behind its calls for a general strike stand the LCR's repeated statements that it is ready to be part of a so-called "government of the left," i.e., a new bourgeois popular front. (Indeed their comrades in Brazil have already done so with their own minister in the Lula popular-front government—an alliance with the arch-capitalist and racist party of textile magnate José Alencar Gomes da Silva.) The LCR, which mobilized a goon squad to defend Chevènement against the indignation of undocumented immigrants and anarchists in the March 5 Paris antiwar demonstration, has already shown in action that they are willing to do the dirty work necessary for such governmental positions.

In contrast to the rest of the left, Lutte Ouvrière stood out for its refusal to call for a vote to Chirac during last year's elections and also again during the war for not signing its name to chauvinist appeals to the Chirac government. But, as we noted during last year's elections, LO's opposition to both Jospin's "plural left" and later to voting for Chirac was vitiated by its refusal to oppose Vigipirate and its explicit support for reactionary cop mobilizations in November 2001. Today, LO has a strong implantation among the teachers in the Seine Saint-Denis district, which is heavily immigrant. These teachers have been waging strike action for weeks against the government's attacks on education, which if implemented would be particularly devastating for immigrant and minority youth. While LO argues that teachers must be mobilized against these attacks, it echoes the government as well as the SP and CP in their campaign to forcibly "assimilate" youth of immigrant origin by expelling young girls for wearing the *hijab* [Muslim headscarf] in public schools. One can hardly "assimilate" into a society that offers no jobs and only police repression!

The indifference of the French left and trade-union bureaucrats to racial oppression flows directly from their program of class collaboration. Despite its statements that workers' emancipation will be the work of the workers themselves, LO, far from offering a program for the workers to emancipate themselves from their traitorous misleaders, simply calls on the workers to be more militant in order to make the bureaucrats fight, arguing that "if part of the workers who were mobilized on May 13 continued the next day, it would put pressure on the union federations to continue" (editorial in LO's factory bulletins, 5 May).

Appealing to the justified anger of many workers against the reformist trade-union misleaders and their "far-left" supporters, the Confédération Nationale du Travail (CNT) claims to be building a new, "revolutionary" trade union. To substitute the idea of a "revolutionary union" or a "syndicalist party" only further fractures the labor movement. We need big, powerful, industry-wide unions which embrace the majority of the proletariat as a class. But to move beyond the framework of economic struggle at the shopfloor, to politically mobilize for the overturn of the inherently unjust capitalist order and to build a society where the workers rule requires forging a new and authentically communist party. The LTF is dedicated to building this party as a revolutionary *tribune of the people* which will fight every injustice, every act of discrimination, as part of a revolutionary internationalist struggle to bring the workers to power. Join us! ■

Immigrants...

(continued from page 1)

prevent a quorum in a key redistricting vote that would increase Republican control of the state House of Representatives. Republicans in Washington and Texas enlisted the Department of Homeland Security in an effort to drag them back to the state.

In March, a federal appeals court ruled that the 600 prisoners held at Guantánamo had no right to challenge their detention in American courts because Guantánamo is under Cuban sovereignty! One doubts that the U.S. would allow these prisoners to appeal to the Cuban courts for their freedom. Among the detainees are at least three youth between the ages of 13 and 15. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld sneers, "They may be juveniles, but they're not on a Little League team anywhere."

All immigrants are targeted, but those who speak out politically are especially in the government's cross hairs. Farouk Abdel-Muhti, a Palestinian activist arrested by the Justice Department's new Absconder Task Force over a year ago, led a hunger strike of detainees while imprisoned in New Jersey this winter. He now languishes in solitary confinement, locked down 23 hours and 15 minutes a day in a maximum security segregation unit's "iron box" in York County Prison in Pennsylvania. Róger Calero, associate editor of the Socialist Workers Party's Spanish-language publication *Perspectiva Mundial* and a staff writer for the *Militant*, has now finally had his removal proceedings terminated after numerous protests.

Dozens of immigrants and citizens have been locked up and interrogated under "material witness" warrants. Among them is Intel software engineer Maher (Mike) Hawash, who has now been slammed with "conspiracy" charges for allegedly attempting to provide material support to Al Qaeda. His Intel co-workers have launched a "Free Mike Hawash" campaign. As his former boss, Steven McGeady, noted of Hawash, an American citizen who was born in the West Bank, "Our friend has fallen into some kind of 'Alice in Wonderland' meets Franz Kafka." He added, "You hear about this happening in other countries and to immigrants and then to American citizens. And finally you hear about it happening to someone you know. It's scary." Free Mike Hawash! Free Farouk Abdel-Muhti!

American citizens Yaser Hamdi and Jose Padilla were pronounced "enemy combatants" by Bush, denied the right to legal counsel and locked away in a military prison where they may stay for the rest of their lives—without ever having the right to a trial. While a federal court ruled that Padilla can meet with an attorney, it also upheld virtually all of the government's claims, including the president's "right" to hold indefinitely anyone for whom there is "some evidence" of being an "enemy combatant." And Padilla has yet to meet his attorney because the government is appealing the court's decision.

The Bush administration maintains that the courts have absolutely no authority to review the president's "enemy combatant" declarations, and the deprivation of rights that comes with them. The proposed Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003 ("Patriot II"), which calls for stripping citizenship from Americans who "provide material support" to an organization which at some time may be deemed "terrorist" by the U.S. government, would institutionalize the treatment of Padilla and Hamdi in the criminal justice system. Bush, Ashcroft, Cheney & Co. haven't merely declared themselves to be above the law—*they say they are the law.*

What the government is implementing is a revision of the infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857; but rather than ruling that black people have "no rights which the white man was bound to respect," the government is declaring that citizens have no rights which the government is bound to respect. The government is developing the "right" to disappear people, just as the tinpot dictatorships that the U.S. imperialists have placed in power and supported around the world have disappeared hundreds of thousands of leftists and union activists.

WV Photo

9 February 2002: Oakland labor-centered mobilization in defense of immigrant rights initiated by Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League.

The laws, measures and decrees being enacted by the Bush administration are ultimately no different from what a military dictatorship would use against its population—suspension of civil courts on presidential command, unlimited powers of police to arrest and detain indefinitely without cause, etc. The government is seeking to make measures that were first directed against immigrants, particularly those from predominantly Muslim countries, permanent fixtures of the American "justice" system. As early as last summer, the *New York Times* (16 July 2002) noted that "the government may now view ordinary trials as more trouble than they are worth." As *Washington Post* (1 December 2002) columnist Charles Lane pointed out, "The Bush administration is developing a parallel legal system in which terrorism suspects—U.S. citizens and non-citizens alike—may be investigated, jailed, interrogated, tried and punished without legal protections guaranteed by the ordinary system, lawyers inside and outside the government say."

AP

U.S. citizen Maher (Mike) Hawash, detained in "anti-terror" government witchhunt, with daughter Sarrah.

The laws and dictates of the Bush administration mark a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. The Democrats have largely supported Bush's war on dissent. Schumer, in the words of a *Village Voice* (16 April) headline, is "Ashcroft's New Ally." To the extent that they expressed opposition to the war on Iraq, the Democrats did so by screaming that it would divert resources from the "war on terror" and "homeland security."

Indeed, much of the groundwork for Bush was laid by the Clinton administration. As Gore Vidal put it, Clinton "set in place the trigger for a police state which his successor is now happily squeezing" (London *Guardian*, 27 April 2002). Most of the immigrants held by the government are detained not under the Patriot Act but under the 1996 Immigration Act. The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, also signed into law by Clinton in 1996, sharply undermined the right of *habeas corpus*, allowed the government to deport immigrants based on undisclosed evidence and made it a crime to support even the lawful activity of an organization labeled "terrorist" by the State Department.

Long before Bush and Asheroft sang this refrain, Clinton ranted that those who did not support his "anti-terrorism" legislation wanted to turn "America into a safe house for terrorists." Even before the Patriot Act, nearly 300 immigrants were being held for over three years without criminal charges. The militarization of the Mexican border, intensified under Clinton and even more so under Bush since 9/11, has meant a sharp increase in the deaths of Latin Americans trying desperately to enter the country, most recently demonstrated by the deaths of 19 people who suffocated in a sealed truck in southern Texas.

Labor: Defend Immigrant Rights!

The new laws and directives that target immigrants are also aimed at black people and the whole working class. Last week, New York City cops literally used weapons of the "war on terror," lobbing a concussion grenade into the apartment of Alberta Spruill, a black city worker, and killing her. When in February NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg, with support from the Justice Department, banned an antiwar march in the name of the "war on terror," the Partisan Defense Committee issued a protest statement (see "Protest Ban on NYC Antiwar March!" *WV* No. 797, 14 February), declaring:

> "When the longshoremen's union on the West Coast was locked in a showdown with union-busting shipping bosses, the government intervened to threaten that any strike action by the workers would be a threat to 'national security' and then brought down the slave-labor Taft-Hartley law. When New York transit workers voted to go on strike, the media screamed that they were launching a 'jihad' and the strikebreaking Taylor Law was invoked. Firefighters who lost over 300 of their comrades trying to save people in the World Trade Center are declared a 'clear and present danger to the security of the United States' in a letter signed by Republican House majority leader Tom DeLay because they are unionized!"

How far the government was willing to go was amply demonstrated on April 7, when riot-equipped cops at the Port of Oakland opened fire on antiwar protesters, longshoremen and port truckers with wooden bullets, pellet-filled "sting bags" and concussion grenades. It was no accident that the cop attack took place in front of the facilities of Stevedoring Services of America, the lead company in the union-busting attacks on the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the one that has been rewarded by Bush with the contract for operating the port of Umm Qasr in Iraq.

As sinister as the new measures are, what the government is actually able to get away with will be determined by the level of social struggle. That was seen not only in the 1960s but in the tumultuous labor battles of the 1930s that, in the wake of an extended period of right-wing reaction, won many of the union rights workers have today. It is in the direct interest of the working class to fight the government's draconian moves.

In February 2002, the Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League initiated a labor-centered united-front protest in Oakland, with longshoremen at the core, in opposition to the government's anti-immigrant witchhunt and the Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act, which mandates background checks aimed at purging the waterfront of blacks, Latinos and other immigrants and at undermining union power. As we explained in "Defend Immigrants! Defend the Unions!" (*WV* No. 775, 22 February 2002), "For many black longshoremen, acting in defense of immigrants—including the unorganized port truckers—represented a conscious break with widespread sentiment that immigrants and blacks are competitors, not allies—a lie cultivated by the capitalist rulers and their labor lieutenants in the trade-union bureaucracy." In mobilizing for the rally, we sought to win workers to the understanding that in defending immigrants, they were defending the whole working class.

Over the last two decades, America's capitalists have secured a fabulous increase in their riches and profits through increasing the exploitation of the working class and slashing virtually all social programs benefiting the poor, particularly the black ghetto masses. America's rulers hate and fear the people. And it is in the context of increasingly glaring social inequality—and the potential for an upsurge in social struggle—that the bourgeois state is reinforcing its arsenal of repression.

More than two million jobs have been lost in the past two years. Funding for school lunches is slashed to the bone; schools, libraries, museums and firehouses are closed for lack of funds. While Bush is pushing hundreds of billions of dollars in tax cuts to the rich, new IRS regulations make it virtually impossible for poor families to avail themselves of the paltry tax break supposedly offered by the earned income credit. In New York City, billionaire Bloomberg now proposes to force even the disabled who receive public assistance into the union-busting slave-labor "workfare" scam. The prison population, overwhelmingly black and Hispanic, now stands at over two million, the highest in the world.

The capitalists' campaign of "national unity" must be punctured by the struggle of the working people and the oppressed in defense of their rights and livelihoods. This requires a fight for the class independence of the proletariat from the capitalists and their political parties. Particularly through its support to the Democratic Party, the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO bureaucracy obstructs class struggle by pushing the lie that the workers and the capitalist exploiters share common interests. Indeed, much of the labor bureaucracy, from AFL-CIO head John Sweeney on down, has backed the "war on terror," with the ILWU International leadership even proposing that the capitalists make the union a partner in the "national security" war, including against other sections of dock workers who are heavily immigrant. At a meeting before a thousand members of the AFSCME city and state workers union in Iowa last week, AFSCME leader Gerald McEntee grotesquely cheered on the Democratic Party presidential hopefuls as they assailed the Bush administration's anti-terror credentials.

Critical to a class-struggle perspective is the mobilization of labor's social power to defend immigrant rights and to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. In this country, the raw exploitation of labor has always come wrapped in the envelope of racial and ethnic hostilities fomented by the capitalist rulers. Black and immigrant workers are not just victims of capitalist repression but a vital component of the multiracial working class. We seek to forge the workers party that will lead the fight not for more crumbs from the capitalists but to overthrow the entire profit system. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

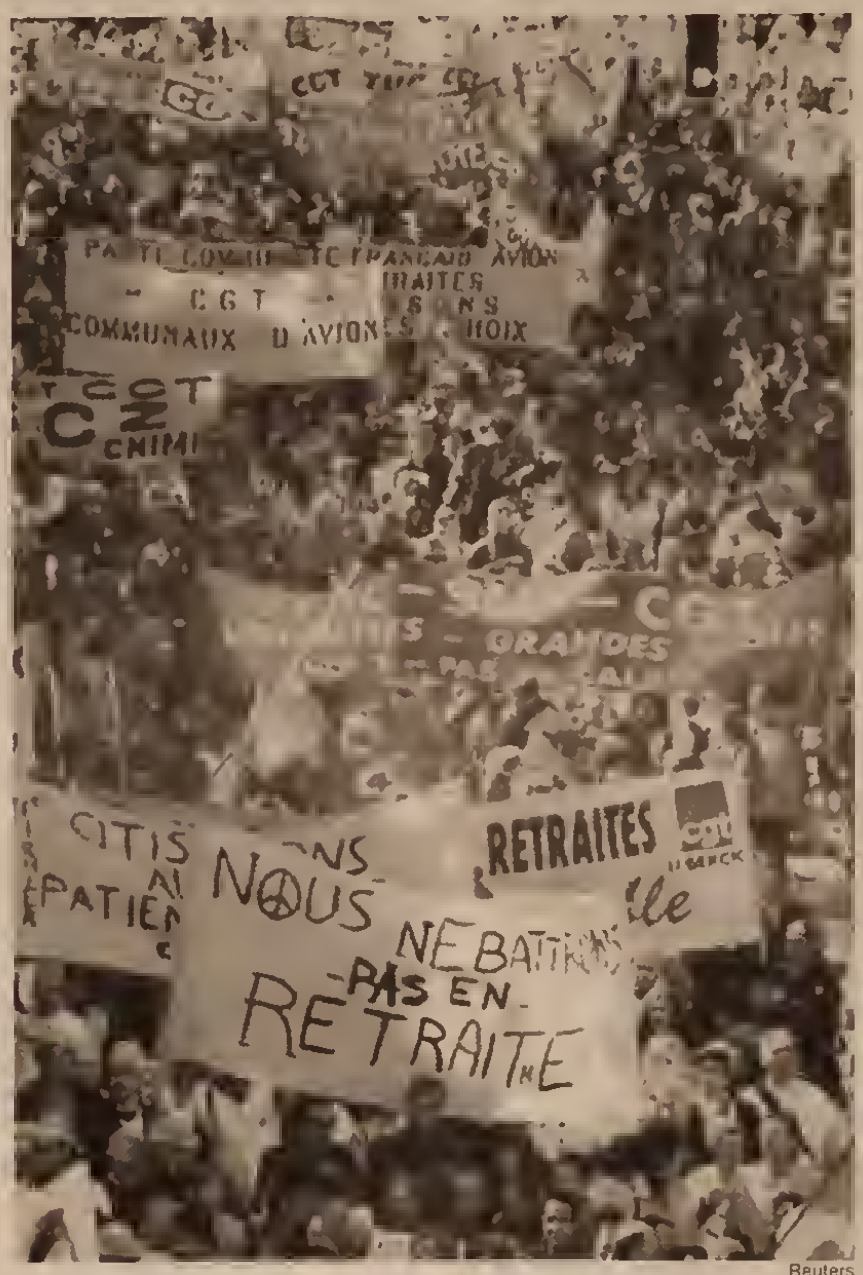
Massive Strike Wave Sweeps France

Down With Vigipirate!
Down With
Racist Expulsions!

For a Multiethnic
Revolutionary
Workers Party!

MAY 19—A strike by up to two million workers last Tuesday brought France to a virtual halt as schools and government offices were closed and public transportation and air traffic were brought to a near standstill. French workers are fighting to beat back attempts by the government of conservative president Jacques Chirac to cut retirement benefits for public employees and increase their payments into the pension system. The union leaders meant the strike to be a one-day "show of force" to back up their negotiations with the government, but the workers were not following the bureaucrats' script. Workers at many locations, voting daily in general assemblies on the shopfloor, continued the strikes, keeping the country largely tied up throughout the week.

There has been considerable public support for the strikes despite the disruption that accompanied them. Lines of tied-up traffic around Paris totaled an estimated 200 miles; the streets of the capital were filled with people walking, skating or cycling to their destinations. It is widely understood that attacks on state employees' pensions are simply a prelude to attacks on everyone's pensions and other social benefits. But leaders of the main trade-union federations, fearful of the explosive anger among the ranks, have tried to put a lid on the situation. Leaders of the Socialist Party-led CFDT trade-union federation broke the united front of all the major union federations by signing a deal with the government and then despicably engaging in active strike-breaking against the workers who continued to strike. The division of the proletariat into separate unions run as political fiefdoms weakens the workers' struggles. Our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France fight for industrial unionism—one industry, one union—to maximize the workers' ***unity*** against the employers and the capitalist state.



Reuters

Lille, May 13: French public employees march against attack on benefits on day of massive strike that shut down transportation and public services.

Today, hundreds of thousands of strikers—primarily teachers, hospital personnel and postal workers—braved heavy rain to march in Paris and other cities. However, while public transportation was shut down in Marseille, most railroad, subway and other public transportation workers, who were key in tying up the country last week, have returned to work. Calling for a nationwide demonstration on Sunday, May 25, the leaders of the Force Ouvrière and CGT union federations are cynically manipulating the combativity of the workers back into a parliamentary framework of "pressuring" the government.

While centered on public employees, last week's strikes mobilized a significant component of workers from the private sector. In the industrial city of Lyon, fully one-half of the strikers were in private industry. This is significant because the strategic component of immigrant workers in the French industrial proletariat is entirely concentrated in the private sector (racist French law bans non-citizens from public sector jobs). "Left" and right-wing governments alike have used racist attacks on minorities to divide and demoralize the working class in France, from racist discrimination in hiring, education and housing to the Vigipirate campaign of military and police terror against immigrants and minorities. Seizing on the terror attacks in Morocco last week, the French government announced that it is raising the Vigipirate "anti-terrorism alert" to "Code Orange," a threat not only to the country's besieged minority communities but to striking workers as well.

We reprint below a 15 May leaflet issued by the LTF, section of the International Communist League.

* * *

With the massive May 13 strikes and demonstrations, which continue today, the working class is ripping apart the reactionary national unity behind the Chirac government that was stitched together by the SP [Socialist Party], CP [Communist Party] and LCR (Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire) together with the trade-union bureaucrats. From their outright vote for Chirac last year "against Le Pen," to heralding the French imperialists as a force for "peace" against U.S. imperialism's colonial slaughter of Iraq, these traitors have done everything in their power to tie the working class to the class enemy. This

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Protest Cop Killing of Alberta Spruill!

New York City

We reprint below a 19 May leaflet issued by the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense.

Alberta Spruill was brutally killed on the morning of May 16 under the pretense of fighting "the war on drugs." A concussion grenade was thrown into her apartment by NYC police under cover of a "no-knock" search warrant. A dozen heavily armed thugs in blue stormed into the 57-year-old black woman's apartment on West 143rd Street in the very heart of Harlem as she was preparing for work at 6 a.m. This was more like a gestapo-style raid. Bush's "shock and awe" brought home and into the black working-class neighborhoods of the U.S. Alberta Spruill had a history of heart trouble and later died as a direct result of this sadistic act in which she was terrorized, handcuffed and forced to endure the horrendous explosion of this weapon.

Alberta Spruill was a proud union member of DC 37 Local 1549, a 29-year city worker with the Division of Citywide Administrative Services. And this killing happened on the exact same day that Mayor Michael Bloomberg rammed through layoffs of at least 2,000 municipal workers.

We in the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense condemn this atrocity and call on ***all*** of the integrated labor movement to mobilize and protest against this racist police killing. On the day of Alberta Spruill's funeral, all of city labor should come out to commemorate their fallen union sister. No business as usual! This would give an organized political expression and social power to the just outrage of the inner city against cop terror, which has been rampant this year with execution-style shootings of blacks and Latinos.

NY Daily News

This cop terror is the domestic reflection of U.S. imperialism's war and present colonial occupation of Iraq and the bipartisan war drive against workers, blacks, minorities and immigrants

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 805

6 June 2003

Ahmed Velazquez photos

Defend the Cuban Revolution!

Washington's "Dissidents"—Trojan Horse for Counterrevolution

May Day celebration in Havana's Plaza de la Revolución. Banner calls for freeing the Miami Five, imprisoned in U.S. for "crime" of monitoring activities of counterrevolutionary Cuban exiles.

On the heels of the colonial invasion and occupation of Iraq, the imperial regime in Washington has intensified its decades-long counterrevolutionary crusade against Cuba. Seizing on the trials and convictions in April of 78 Cuban pro-imperialist "dissidents," Colin Powell raged that Cuba is an "aberration in the Western hemisphere" (*New York Times*, 29 April). The U.S. expelled 14 Cuban diplomats, canceled all educational travel to Cuba and is threatening to cut off family remittances to Cuba amounting to as much as $1 billion a year. The bipartisan hue and cry over "repression" in Cuba has been echoed by petty-bourgeois liberal and "leftist" intellectuals who lend their "anti-imperialist" credentials to U.S. imperialism's drive to overthrow the Cuban Revolution.

One of seven countries targeted for a potential nuclear first strike, Cuba is squarely in the cross hairs of the American rulers. With the aid of his brother Jeb, the governor of Florida, President Bush plays to the counterrevolutionary *gusanos* (worms)—the former pimps and torturers of the Batista dictatorship overthrown by Castro's forces in 1959—who continue to wage a campaign of terrorism supported by their CIA masters. Bush's administration is rife with *gusanos*, such as "presidential envoy to the Americas" Otto Reich. Other prominent members of the Bush team include John Negroponte and Elliot Abrams, who in the 1980s directed the CIA-backed contra terrorists in Nicaragua and the death squad regime in El Salvador.

Ever since the government of Fidel Castro expropriated the capitalist class in Cuba in 1960-61, establishing a bureaucratically deformed workers state, the U.S. ruling class has worked relentlessly to undermine the Cuban Revolution and re-establish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—from the 1961 Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) invasion to repeated attempts to assassinate Castro; from funding *gusano* terrorists in Miami to the ongoing economic embargo. For more than three decades, the biggest obstacle to Washington's drive for capitalist restoration in Cuba was the existence of the Soviet Union, which supported Cuba with some $4 billion a year in aid and provided a crucial military shield against imperialism. In the wake of the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, the imperialist rulers saw their big chance to bury the Cuban Revolution once and for all.

The collapse of the USSR also enabled the American bourgeoisie to pursue different means of promoting counterrevolution in Cuba, combining military provocations and economic strangulation with policies aimed at strengthening pro-capitalist forces within Cuba. President Clinton twice tightened the embargo in the mid 1990s in an attempt to squeeze Cuba into submission. However, many U.S. corporations that seek to compete with capitalists from West Europe and Canada in exploiting Cuba have long pressured the government to ease restrictions and loosen the 44-year-long economic embargo.

Representative of the strategy of "constructive engagement" was last year's visit to Havana by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter. Carter's visit was timed to coincide with the Varela petition campaign, whose supporters form the bulk of those recently imprisoned by the Cuban government. In addition to calling for freedom of expression and association, the Varela petition also demands "free elections and the right to private enterprise"—demands that amount to a call for "democratic" counterrevolution, the "electoral" rise to power of capitalist-restorationist forces financed by American imperialist largesse, which would be accompanied by a bloodbath of workers and Communists. Yet Carter was welcomed by Castro and offered a platform on Cuban TV and radio to spew his imperialist propaganda.

The Varela project, named after a 19th-century Cuban priest, was launched around the time of the 1998 visit by Pope John Paul II to Cuba—again with Castro's blessing. It is led by the head of the "Christian Liberation Movement," Oswaldo Payá, and supported and funded by the U.S. State Department, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the Catholic church. The U.S. imperialists see Varela as a Cuban version of counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność, as the *Washington Post* (13 January) made clear in a feature on Payá headlined "Solidarity, Cuban-Style."

While some of the recently jailed "dissidents" are described as "independent journalists," "independent economists" or "independent librarians," most, if not all were apparently working with James Cason, who runs the U.S. Interests Section in Havana as an open rallying center for counterrevolution. Cason's first act upon arrival in Cuba last year was to hand out short-wave radios tuned to the CIA's Radio Martí. Since then he has been busy hosting "dissidents" at his home, funneling money to them and publishing the work of "independent journalists."

The round-ups in Cuba coincided with the terrorist hijackings of two Cuban airliners and a passenger boat (on top of four other hijackings in the preceding six months), at least implicitly encouraged by Washington. Indeed, one of the hijacked planes was impounded by the American government as payment for a lawsuit by the terrorist "Brothers to the Rescue" against the Cuban government, while a U.S. judge ordered that a number of the hijackers be released on bail. Imagine what the U.S. government would do if these hijackers were from any other country!

While the Bush administration has

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"This Country Is Tyrannical"

Partisan Defense Committee secretary Kevin Gilroy received the following letter from Janine Phillips Africa, one of the nine MOVE members who were framed up and sent to prison for life, one of whom has since died, after the massive cop assault on the Philadelphia MOVE commune on 8 August 1978.

6 April 2003

On the Move Kevin

I got your news letter and stipend. Thank you.

We're following the attack on Iraq and it's *shameless*. I don't know anything about Saddam Hussein because I know how corrupt govt. is and he probably is guilty of atrocities against his citizens but so is the U.S. I, my family are examples of this country's brutality.

We know the strike against Iraq has nothing to do with weapons of mass destruction or the liberation of the Iraq people. It's *political*, the U.S. wants the oil and control of the Middle East. They are no different than the other warmongers thru-out history that plundered other countries to gain power.

The attack on Iraq reminds us so much of this country's attack of MOVE. They couldn't control us, make us stop confronting their corrupt officials and policies so they made up the lie that our house was a health code violation and demanded to inspect our house. They claim the attack on 8/8/78 was because we refused to leave the house. They said we had a bomb in our basement, like they said Iraq has weapons of mass destruction. But if they really felt that way why would they attack? If we had a bomb attacking us would have been deadly. Just like bombing Iraq would be foolish if they really felt they had such dangerous weapons.

The U.S. wanted to get rid of MOVE so they prefabricated a platform to attack, just like they have done with Iraq. And *now* the cause has gone from weapons of mass destruction to liberating the Iraqis. When has bombing and shooting down people been equated with liberating them. It must be under the same definition of flooding, gassing, shooting at our children to save them. This govt. uses the same tactic, the same outline in every situation *they* cause. But just like their attack on MOVE has back-fired in their face, this attack on Iraq will also.

It's just a shame how this govt. has duped people. The people who support the attack on Iraq are only feeling this way because they *believe* all the lies this govt. is feeding them. Just like people allowed the govt. to attack MOVE, put us in prison for 30-100 yrs., murder our family because they believed all the lies this govt. fed them thru the media about MOVE.

If people knew the truth about the situation in Iraq and the *real* motives of this country, they wouldn't support this merciless murdering of innocent people. Just like if people knew the truth about our situation, they would be demanding the release of the MOVE 9.

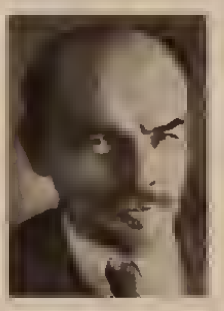
This is why *John Africa* fights this system so hard because it's not the cops, armies, navies, MOVE is against, it's the *mentality* that is dangerous. The poison this system is feeding folks to turn them into their legal henchman. That's what's dangerous. And this system is feeding it to people daily, thru their schools, institutions and *media*, that is the main source of poisoning. Look at the mass control govt. has over people because of the media! That's a weapon of mass destruction. Because of the media this country is causing the mass destruction of whole countries.

They're calling Saddam Hussein a tyrant but look at what they are doing to their own citizens just for *demonstrating*, which is people's *constitutional* right! This country is tyrannical because the instant you say anything against it, you're beaten, arrested and thrown in prison and *killed*. Now people can see how MOVE ended up in prison. It's the *same* pattern.

Well Kevin I'm going to stop now. This country is spiralling to a bad situation. Take care!

On The Move
Janine

TROTSKY



LENIN

For the Right of All Nations to Self-Determination!

In its epoch of imperialist decay, particularly since the victory of counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, capitalism has intensified national oppression around the world. In fighting against all national privilege and for the right to self-determination, i.e., political independence, we are guided by the proletarian internationalist understanding of V.I. Lenin, whose Bolshevik Party led the multinational working class of the Russian tsarist prison house of peoples to power in 1917.

The interests of the working class and of its struggle against capitalism demand complete solidarity and the closest unity of the workers of all nations; they demand resistance to the nationalist policy of the bourgeoisie of every nationality. Hence, Social-Democrats [i.e., communists] would be deviating from proletarian policy and subordinating the workers to the policy of the bourgeoisie if they were to repudiate the right of nations to self-determination, i.e., the right of an oppressed nation to secede, or if they were to support all the national demands of the bourgeoisie of oppressed nations....

Successful struggle against exploitation requires that the proletariat be free of nationalism, and be absolutely neutral, so to speak, in the fight for supremacy that is going on among the bourgeoisie of the various nations. If the proletariat of any one nation gives the slightest support to the privileges of its "own" national bourgeoisie, that will inevitably rouse distrust among the proletariat of another nation; it will weaken the international class solidarity of the workers and divide them, to the delight of the bourgeoisie. Repudiation of the right to self-determination or to secession inevitably means, in practice, support for the privileges of the dominant nation.

—V.I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1914)

New Legal Papers Filed

Free Mumia Now!

On May 23, attorneys for Mumia Abu-Jamal filed a 43-page motion demanding that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court order Mumia's former lead counsel Leonard Weinglass to testify in court. In a blistering indictment, the document cites the "complex web of duplicity and sabotage" and the "conflicts of interest" of Weinglass and his cohort Daniel Williams, who "were responsible for their intentional burying of evidence that proves" Jamal's innocence in the December 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. The new motion sets forth 15 specific charges against Weinglass, including his scrapping of the 1999 confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed Faulkner.

The new papers rely heavily on the work of Partisan Defense Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, another attorney associated with the PDC, who both resigned from Jamal's legal team in July 1999 rather than be complicit in Weinglass and Williams' betrayal. Wolkenstein provided a detailed account of Weinglass' treachery in a July 2001 affidavit (reprinted in the September 2001 PDC pamphlet, *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!*). The new legal papers describe how Weinglass refused to investigate evidence proving Jamal's innocence and then actively suppressed Beverly's confession. Referring to "a wealth of evidence...in the possession of Weinglass which corroborated Beverly," the papers declare: "A stack of memoranda approximately the size of a New York City phonebook were written by attorneys Wolkenstein and Piper and their investigative staff detailing how this evidence corroborated the Beverly confession."

The disloyalty of Weinglass and Williams was made clear with Williams' publication—just before the release of the Beverly confession—of his scurrilous book *Executing Justice*, which purported to be an "inside account" of Jamal's case. Written with Weinglass' knowledge, the book falsely presented the facts of the case, disclosed confidential information and repeatedly implied that Mumia was guilty. In a letter to Mumia, Weinglass acknowledged that the book was a "preemptive strike" against use of Beverly's confession—and that is precisely how it has been used by the prosecution in preventing the admission of this crucial evidence in court for over two years.

In December 2001, a federal court overturned Jamal's death sentence while affirming the frame-up murder conviction, condemning Mumia to a life behind bars. The state appealed to reinstate the death sentence, while Jamal's attorneys appealed to have the conviction overturned. Both appeals are on hold pending a Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling on another appeal by Jamal's attorneys against the barring of Beverly's testimony.

From the time the PDC took up Jamal's case in 1987, we have sought to ensure that every legal avenue was pursued to free him while fighting against illusions in the capitalist state. As stated in the introduction to *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!*: "The long hidden and suppressed evidence of Mumia's innocence is the truth. But in this capitalist system of injustice, the truth is insufficient to secure Jamal's freedom. What we need is not just more truth but more social power. It is elementary that if labor's power is to be brought to bear in a mighty blow on Jamal's behalf, it must be mobilized independently of the very forces of the capitalist state that have worked for years to frame up and kill this innocent man." *Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!* ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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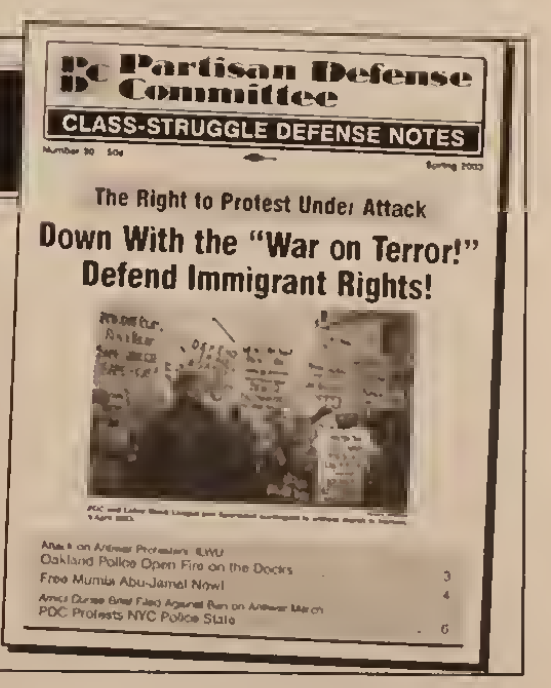


Down With Anti-Basque Repression in Spain!

The Spanish state landed yet another blow in its chauvinist campaign to stamp out Basque nationalist militancy with the March 17 Spanish Supreme Court ruling outlawing the Basque political party Batasuna under the government's new "anti-terror" Law on Political Parties. This is the first time since the end of the Francoist dictatorship in 1975 that a political party has been banned, a qualitative step toward banning any organization advocating the Basque right to self-determination.

Batasuna and its previous incarnations, Euskal Herritarrok and Herri Batasuna, have had to fight for their legality for over 23 years. Under the new law, the Supreme Court banned Batasuna for the "crime" of not condemning attacks carried out by Basque-separatist ETA. That silence is tantamount to being a terrorist is but one chilling example of how the capitalist rulers from the U.S. to Europe have cynically wielded the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center to vastly expand their powers of repression against workers and the oppressed.

Having supported the U.S. in its colonial war against Iraq in the face of overwhelming opposition at home, rightist Spanish prime minister José María Aznar had the favor returned by the U.S. when the State Department added Batasuna to its list of terrorist organizations. Spain continues to campaign for the European Union to do likewise, while the political heirs of Generalissimo Franco in Aznar's rightist Popular Party gloat over a recent statement signed by several prominent novelists including Nadine Gordimer, Günther Grass and Mario Vargas Llosa denouncing Basque nationalists and lauding Spanish "democracy"!

The Basque region represents a classic case of an oppressed nation forcibly denied the right of self-determination, that is, the right to form an independent state. While the heart of the Basque country is in northern Spain, the Basque nation extends into southern France; both countries have sought to repress the Basque language and culture. The Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League, forthrightly calls for the right of self-determination for the Basque people in both Spain and France.

Batasuna represents the second-largest political party in the Spanish Basque country, with 10 percent of the vote in the regional elections of 2001. Since last August, under an initial "temporary" ban ordered by Judge Baltasar Garzón, Batasuna had its assets seized, its offices shut down, its demonstrations and public meetings banned and many of its members arrested and jailed. Not content with having outlawed the largest pro-independence party, the Spanish Constitutional Court upheld a ban on candidates who had *ever* been associated with Batasuna or its predecessors from running in the May 25 regional elections. This meant that 1,500 candidates and 225 electoral lists were banned. Yet Batasuna, regrouped as Autodeterminaziorako Bilgunea (AuB), scored a victory when some 120,000 voters—approximately 10 percent of the electorate—defied the government by filing ballots for proscribed candidates or submitting slips of paper containing ETA's political demands.

The Spanish state's vendetta against pro-independence forces was met with massive protest on May 10 in Bilbao when 20,000 took the streets in a banned march which the police were powerless to stop. The Spanish state's attack is so clearly aimed at anyone who supports Basque independence that even the respectable "moderate" Basque nationalists, like the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV), had been compelled to come to Batasuna's defense. The PNV was one of *only* two parties to vote against the parliamentary motion calling for banning Batasuna.

On February 20, the government closed the only remaining newspaper printed exclusively in the Basque language, Euskara, in a dawn raid by hundreds of hooded police officers. On the basis of an indictment that is being kept secret, ten journalists and managers of the

Reuters

September 2002: Protest in San Sebastian against banning of Basque nationalist Batasuna party and for release of Basque political prisoners came under police attack.

AP

Basque-language *Euskaldunon Egunkaria*, a paper funded in large part by the vehemently anti-ETA Basque regional government, were arrested for allegedly colluding with ETA. One of those arrested, a former editor of the paper, tried to commit suicide after being held incommunicado by the police for five days. The current editor, Martxelo Otamendi, reported having been subjected to torture, including having plastic bags placed over his head such that he could not breathe and having a pistol held to his temple. After making their accusations, Otamendi and three other newspaper directors were sued by the government for "collaborating with an armed band" on the basis that, by "falsely" accusing their jailers of torture, they reinforced ETA-inspired attacks on the government.

It is no surprise that the Spanish state, which was exposed for deploying GAL (Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación) death squads against Basque militants throughout the 1980s, routinely uses torture against arrested Basque militants. However, the arrests and torture of *Egunkaria* staff have elicited broad protest. Even a senior minister of the Socialist Workers Party of Spain (PSOE), which oversaw the GAL death squads when it headed the government and has fully supported the recent anti-Basque repression, was compelled to admit that he believed the reports of torture by the arrested editor. Demonstrating that innocence or guilt is hardly the point of the state's prosecution of "terrorism" is the fact that the staff of *Egin*, the Basque newspaper shut down by the Spanish state in 1998 under similar charges of aiding ETA, are still awaiting trial.

For years, France has collaborated with Spain in waging a brutal campaign of repression against Basque militants, deporting many to face torture in Spanish prisons while keeping dozens locked up in French jails. During the 1980s, under Socialist president François Mitterrand, the French police worked hand in hand with the GAL death squads, which operated with impunity in France. Today, the government of conservative neo-Gaullist Jacques Chirac has stepped up repression against Basque militants in France. French anti-terrorist police last month even arrested a Spanish lawyer, Unai Errea, accusing him of passing Basque-language documents to an accused ETA member imprisoned in Paris.

It is urgently necessary for this state repression to be met with mobilizations of the working class in opposition to the sinister campaign aimed not only against fighters for Basque national rights but ultimately at the working class as a whole. If the Spanish workers movement does not come to the aid of the oppressed Basque people and persecuted militants, then it will be unable to effectively fight in its own defense against a ruling class that has assembled a vast array of "anti-terror" powers to use against *any* militant opposition to Spanish capitalist rule. ***Down with the ban of Batasuna and AuB! Free the hundreds of Basque nationalist prisoners in Spain and France!***

While millions in Spain, including powerful trade unions, protested the Spanish-backed U.S. slaughter in Iraq, it is criminal that there has been essentially no protest outside of the Basque country in opposition to Aznar's war against the Basque people at home. The obstacle to working-class struggle in defense of the Basques is not only the social democrats of the PSOE who promote the reactionary chauvinism of the Castilian bourgeoisie and stand in opposition to the right of self-determination for the Basque people. It is also the United Left (IU) coalition led by the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) and including several pseudo-Trotskyist organizations. While the IU recently stated that the Spanish prime minister is imitating "the international terrorist Bush" with measures such as the banning of Batasuna, this is fairly cynical given that IU *abstained* on the motion to ban Batasuna when it came up for a vote in parliament. Furthermore, IU leader Gaspar Llamazares in a 5 May statement effectively blamed Batasuna for the government ban, claiming that it had chosen confrontation instead of distancing itself from violence.

Following last week's electoral results, a bomb planted under a police car killed two cops last Friday in the Navarre town of Sangüesa. In February, ETA killed the police chief in the northern Basque town of Andoain. For Marxists, such attacks on agents of bourgeois state repression are not crimes from the standpoint of the working class. While defending ETA against state repression, Marxists oppose the desperate petty-bourgeois strategy of individual terrorism as an obstacle to proletarian, internationalist class struggle: the elimination of individual oppressors does not address the fundamental issue of getting rid of the capitalist system itself, which requires collective struggle by the working masses. Moreover, indiscriminate terror against innocent civilians, which ETA has also perpetrated in the past, is a crime from the standpoint of the working class, serving only to provoke violence between different peoples and to feed the fears and hatreds inherent in all nationalism.

Castilian chauvinism is used to divide and weaken the workers movement in the same way that anti-immigrant racism is used to pit workers against each other. According to the Association of Immigrant Moroccan Workers in Spain, in the past five years *4,000 people* have lost their lives at sea in the attempt to make it to Europe through Spain. For those who succeed, their lives are a living hell of racist discrimination, repression and violence. According to a study published last year by Amnesty International, fully 40 percent of Spain's prison population consists of immigrants. We fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

It is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to defend the right of self-determination for oppressed nationalities such as the Basques in both Spain and France. The rich history of united working-class struggle in Spain—from the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s to the pre-revolutionary upsurge that followed the death of Franco in 1975—has demonstrated that the resolution of the national question in Spain is inextricably linked with the struggle for workers power throughout the Iberian peninsula. Only a Leninist vanguard party defending this democratic right will be able to unite the Basques with workers throughout Spain—as well as with workers in Portugal and across the Pyrenees in France—in a common struggle for workers power. ***Down with anti-Basque repression in Spain and France! For Trotskyist parties in Spain and France, sections of a reforged Fourth International!*** ■

NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate issues in June, July and August.**

Our next issue will be dated July 4.

For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

The Kurdish People and the U.S. Occupation of Iraq

The following is the concluding part of an edited presentation by Workers Vanguard *Editorial Board member Bruce André at a Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club public educational in Berkeley on May 3. Part One appeared in* WV *No. 804 (23 May).*

PART TWO

As I mentioned, the carving up of the Kurdish nation dates back to the close of WWI, when the British and other colonialist powers drew the borders of Iraq and the other countries of the Near East. It is useful to review this history, not only in laying bare the workings of imperialist domination; it also shows the tremendous impact the Russian Revolution had on the peoples of the Near East and how that impact helped shape the modern Near East. The guiding principle for the imperialists was "divide and rule." The Arabs of Palestine, including what is today Jordan, wanted to be united with the Arabs of what is now Syria and Lebanon; they were divided into separate countries. In what is now Iraq, Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims and Kurds and Turkmens wanted to live separately; they were forced to live under a single roof.

Before WWI was even finished, the British and French imperialists divided up the spoils of their impending victory in the secret Sykes-Picot Treaty of 1916. The publication of that document by the Bolshevik workers state exposed the imperialists' machinations and had an electrifying effect across the region. Simultaneously, the British secretly promised Sharif Hussein of Mecca that he could be king of a united Arab state in return for siding with the British. This so-called "Arab revolt" against the Turks was important propagandistically for the British, because the troops that were essential for controlling the British empire, the armies of India and Egypt, consisted mainly of Britain's Muslim colonial subjects; many of them saw the war against the Ottomans as a war against Islam.

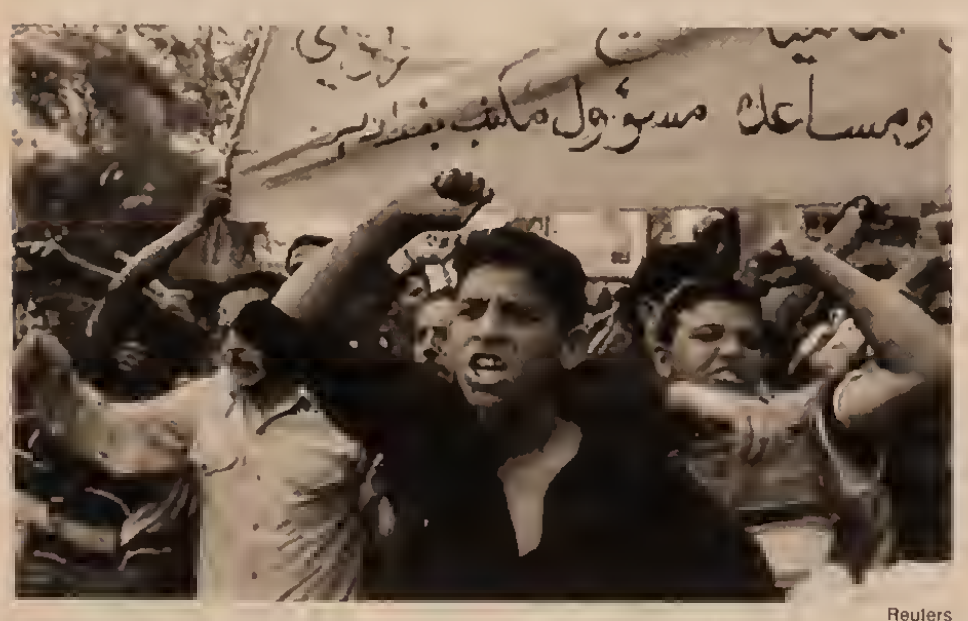
Obviously, all these cynical promises—the British even promised in the Balfour Declaration to grant the Zionists a Jewish homeland in Palestine—were mutually contradictory. The Kurds were also promised their own state—albeit a truncated one—in the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres. But they never got even that deformed expression of national self-determination. By 1920, it was becoming clear that the former Ottoman *vilayet* (province) of Mosul, which had been assigned to France under the Sykes-Picot Treaty, had much more oil than was originally thought. So Britain decided to keep it, creating a new country called Iraq that basically corresponded to the concession of the British-controlled Turkish Petroleum Company. Incidentally, you may find this interesting: in deciding how Iraq would be compensated for its oil, the precedent used was "the way in which the United States government had dealt with the sale of the lands of the Osage Indians" (Edith and E.F. Penrose, *Iraq* [1978]). The splitting of Kurdistan was duly approved by the League of Nations, which Lenin called a "den of thieves." It served—as the UN does today—as a fig leaf for imperialist interests.

Sir Ernest Goodale

1918: British troops train for poison gas attacks against rebels in Iraq during colonial occupation following World War I. Right: British forces round up Kurds in Baghdad during period of nationalist uprisings in mid 1920s.

Bettman

Meanwhile, the Bolshevik Revolution—and its extension to largely Muslim Central Asia in the course of the bloody three-year Civil War against the imperialist-backed counterrevolutionary White armies—triggered a series of national revolts and popular uprisings in the broad swath occupied by British forces from Egypt through the Fertile Crescent to Iran. The Turks, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (a/k/a Atatürk), waged a national war—backed by the Soviet power under Lenin—to drive out the British-backed Greek army and secure the borders of the modern Turkish state, including northern Kurdistan. (By the way, Atatürk was backed by the Kurds in Turkey, who were rewarded with merciless repression.) In Egypt, as strikes and demonstrations swept the country in 1919, one observer reported that "news of success or victory by the Bolsheviks" in the Russian Civil War "seems to produce a pang of joy and content among all classes of Egyptians" (Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* [1978]). Also in 1919 open rebellion broke out in the Punjab in India; hundreds were shot down by British troops.



Reuters

Baghdad: Iraqi Shi'ites protest U.S. colonial occupation, April 21.

That same year, the Kurds rose in revolt against British occupation. One Kurd declared: "We will have no foreign power over us, we are Bolsheviks and will rule ourselves" (David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* [1996]). The British crushed the Kurdish revolt, using air bombardment against civilians for the first time in history. One of those who got his start bombing Kurdish families was Arthur "Bomber" Harris, the ghoulish war criminal who later oversaw the firebombing of Dresden. Anticipating Rumsfeld by 80 years, Winston Churchill, at the time secretary for war and air, hailed the use of air power against Britain's colonial subjects for allowing "a very large reduction to be made in the size and consequently the cost of the garrison" (Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill, Volume IV* [1978]).

The following year, the Arabs of Mesopotamia (southern Iraq) rose in revolt and stood up to the more than 130,000 British troops, costing the British 2,500 casualties before their revolt was drowned in blood. Churchill clamored for using mustard gas bombs against the Iraqi rebels; it was decided instead to bombard them with poison gas artillery shells. Maybe that example helped inspire Saddam Hussein when he in turn gassed the Kurds.

Meanwhile, a debate was raging behind the closed doors of the British government over how to administer the Near East territories occupied by British troops. The debate was framed by the revolts sweeping the region and by the victories of the Bolsheviks in the Civil War against the counterrevolutionary White armies and the imperialist troops sent to crush the Russian Revolution.

Some colonialists like Churchill were arguing that it would be less costly and more stable to set up formally independent states and impose imperialist domination through indirect rule. But the rulers of British India who held sway opposed any concession to rising nationalism, which they feared would set a dangerous example in India and the rest of the empire.

It is fascinating to trace this debate in Churchill's personal papers. Churchill was obsessed by the danger of what he called the "bacillus" of Bolshevism infecting India. He wrote to the secretary of foreign affairs: "The ruin of Lenin and Trotsky and the system they embody is indispensable to the peace and revival of the world" (Aaron Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World* [1970]).

The British had been counting on Georgia and other British client states in the Caucasus to serve as a buffer between the Russian Revolution and the lands under British colonial occupation. With the Red Army driving against the troops of British-supported General Deniken, Churchill wrote frantically in February 1920 that British forces in Iraq were "totally insufficient to...enable us to offer effective resistance to a Bolshevik advance short of the main frontiers of India." In April, the Red Army destroyed Deniken's forces; a soviet republic was declared in Baku. Churchill wrote: "Are we to defend Persia or not? If we do not, Persia will be demoralized by Russian Bolshevism.... If we do we shall, in all probability, find ourselves drawn into a very considerable and indefinite entanglement."

Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks, counterattacking against an invasion by Pilsudski's Poland, drove to the gates of Warsaw, hoping to draw the Red Army up to the German border and touch off social-

ist revolution in Germany. But the Red Army was driven back. In October, Churchill wrote with relief: "We well know the shocking dangers from which we were miraculously rescued by the Battle of Warsaw." By the end of the year, almost all the foreign and White armies had been driven from Soviet soil. The rebellion in southern Iraq had been crushed. The British now moved swiftly to create a new line of formally independent states in the Near East. The minutes of the December 31 cabinet meeting report that the government now took up a proposal to make Sharif Hussein's son, Faisal, king of Mesopotamia:

> "His advent would serve to satisfy national sentiment for a year or two and to keep the country contented, in which case the Army of Occupation might be reduced....
> "It was pointed out that if Feisal was made King with the assent of the Arabs, ...Mesopotamia would probably settle down and would then be comparatively easy to administer."
>
> —Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill, Volume IV*

In March 1921, the successful but exhausting Civil War concluded, Lenin launched the New Economic Policy, conceived as a temporary retreat and stabilization. The same month, the lines of the new order in the Arab Near East were drawn at a conference in Cairo. With Churchill, now secretary for colonies, chairing the session, the final division of the Near East was carried out: the kingship of Iraq was turned over to Faisal. A piece of the British mandate in Palestine was chopped off, named Transjordan (today it's Jordan) and offered as a kingship to Abdullah, Faisal's elder brother. The previous year, France had split off Lebanon from Syria. The map of the Near East had been drawn pretty much as it is today.

The Kurds and the Leninist Position on the National Question

The policy of "divide and rule" worked wonders in the Near East by turning the colonial subjects against each other instead of against the imperialist masters. As Arab nationalism developed in the 1920s and '30s, it took as its model not the Great French Revolution of 1789, but rather Bismarck's unification of Germany. (The Zionists hark back to Bismarck, too—that's "nation-building" in the epoch of imperialism.) Every Arab strongman, from Iraq's King Faisal to Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt to Saddam Hussein, put himself forward as the Arab Bismarck, who would unite the Arabs in a single state. Thus the so-called "Arab Revolution" was not directed against the imperialists or the capitalist ruling classes in the Near East. Instead, it boiled down to power plays by Arab countries seeking to dominate their neighbors, all the while carrying out vicious repression against the working class and national, religious and ethnic minorities.

As everywhere, attempts in the Near East to consolidate homogenous nation-states under capitalism meant "ethnic cleansing" of national minorities like the Kurds—forced assimilation or armed terror to drive them out. The Ba'ath Party—classic Arab nationalists represented by Assad's Syria and Saddam Hussein's Iraq—was all in favor of an independent Kurdish state—but in Turkey and Iran, not in lands they claimed for the Arab nation: "The generous Arab nation has taken all these minorities under its protection...to leave them the choice of either remaining within the Arab homeland or else of emigrating" (Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem* [1969]).

Of course, that's also the position of Arab nationalists concerning the Jews of Israel, or to be more precise, the Hebrew-speaking people. In a recent polemic against us, the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), whose position on the Near East is an almost word-for-word parroting of the Arab nationalists', expressed it this way: "It can be said that Israelis unwilling to live in a Palestinian workers' state will have the right to leave" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Spring 2002).

The LRP article does not so much as mention, much less defend, the rights of women in the Arab countries or of non-Muslim minorities or non-Arab ones like the Kurds.

This blindness to the Kurdish question is not an accident and it is not limited to the LRP. The Kurds are largely invisible to most of the left internationally. It's not like the Kurds have not been in the news. For example, in 1999, PKK leader Öcalan was arrested—with a key role being played by the CIA—and sentenced to death by a kangaroo court in Turkey. Tens of thousands participated in emergency protests around the world against his arrest and, later, against the verdict. The ICL organized contingents in those demonstrations and widely distributed a declaration issued by our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany published in Turkish, German, Italian, French and English. But other left groups were conspicuous by their absence at many of those demonstrations. *WV* ran a series of front-page articles demanding "Freedom for Öcalan!" But you can search in vain in the back issues of the LRP's *Proletarian Revolution* for any headlines about these events.

One group even comes out in *opposition* to independence for Kurdistan, the International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT), a clot whose founding leaders dropped out of our organization in the 1980s under the pressure of Reagan's anti-Soviet Cold War campaign. Claiming to uphold the "right of self-determination" for the Kurds, the IBT in 1993 declared that the PKK's call "for an independent capitalist Kurdistan against the wishes of the feeble Kurdish bourgeoisie, and with the bulk of the Kurdish people indifferent, makes no sense at all" (*1917*, 1993). The IBT lectured that an independent Kurdistan "would be a society characterized by backward, pre-capitalist social structures. Because of its underdevelopment, an independent Kurdistan would find itself at the mercy of the regional as well as imperialist powers."

This is such an open capitulation to the designs of the imperialists and to the national chauvinism of their client states that it almost leaves one speechless. Let me point out that the IBT's article was reprinted from the press of their comrades

WV Map

in Germany, where the bourgeoisie—and their social-democratic lieutenants in the labor movement—are virulently hostile to Kurdish nationalism. Even displaying the Kurdish national colors is illegal in Germany, as it is in Turkey. To answer the IBT, let's go back to basic Leninist principles:

We are opposed to nationalism as an ideology, a bourgeois ideology that is counterposed to the principle of class struggle; nationalism means unity of all classes in defense of the nation. But we are far from indifferent to national oppression. In fact, on this as on all questions of oppression, we Marxists are the most intransigent fighters for liberation. Our starting point is the strict equality of nations; we defend the right of all nations to national self-determination; that means the right to secede and form an independent state. This applies to all nations. We don't pose preconditions as the IBT does in the quote I just read, demanding that, before the Kurds can be independent,they must be free of "backward" social structures and not be at the "mercy" of imperialist powers—which is impossible in any case for small countries in the epoch of imperialism.

First and foremost, we want to take the national question off the agenda. We say to working people of oppressed nations: The revolutionary proletariat fights for your democratic national rights; break with your capitalist oppressor and join us across national lines in common class struggle against our joint enemy, the capitalist class. As a general rule, our approach on this question is essentially negative. We are against national oppression and we fight for the right of national self-determination. But that doesn't necessarily mean that we are for the exercise of that right, i.e., the setting up of an independent state. Lenin compared this to divorce: we are for the defense of the right of divorce, but we are not necessarily for a particular couple getting one.

However, there are cases in which we are for national independence. Again, our starting point is the question of what is in the interests of the struggle for socialist revolution—remember, we want to take the national question off the agenda. A case in point is Quebec, an oppressed nation confined within Canada (which is the IBT's home territory, by the way). There, the national divide has poisoned relations between the working class of English Canada and of Quebec to such a point that the recognition by the workers of each nation that the enemy is their respective capitalist rulers and not each other can only come through the setting up of an independent Quebec. This question was not decided in a referendum; it was basically decided back in 1970 with the introduction of French-only language laws in Quebec. (If you want to follow up on this question, we dealt with it in depth in *Spartacist* No. 52, Autumn 1995.) The IBT opposes independence for Quebec, which is an open capitulation to Anglo chauvinism in English Canada.

Now, what about Kurdistan? You're certainly not going to see a democratic referendum on this question in any country of the Near East. How can one determine if the road is still open to assimilation of Kurds into the dominant Arab nation or if the national lines are too deeply drawn? To simply ask the question is to answer it! The Kurdish people's history of tenacious rebellion against their oppressors—at the cost of incalculable human losses—goes back more than 80 years. Iraqi Kurds fought almost uninterruptedly against the British and their quisling regimes from 1919 through the 1930s. Despite the betrayals by their nationalist leaders, the Kurds continued their revolts against savage repression at the hands of the Ba'ath Party after the British-backed monarchy was overthrown in 1958. In Iran, Kurds fought the British following World War II, leading to the establishment of the independent Mahabad republic in Iranian Kurdistan; they took up the revolt again against Khomeini's Islamic Republic.

In Turkey, a series of Kurdish revolts continuing from the 1920s into the late '30s was crushed with more than 1.5 million Turkish Kurds either massacred or

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Praeger Inc.

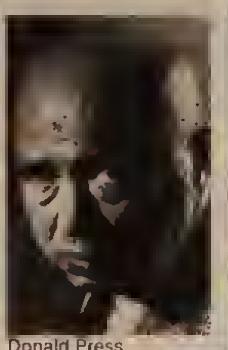
July 1958: Mass demonstration in Baghdad as Iraqi officers' coup toppled British-imposed monarchy. Opportunity for workers revolution was derailed by Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy and Iraqi Communist leadership.

"State Department Socialists"

LRP Exposes Itself

Some 200 people attended a puhlic dehate between the Spartacist League and the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) on May 10 in New York City, titled "The Fight Against Imperialist War: Which Way Forward?" In a 23 May Web posting, the LRP announced with typical bombast, "LRP Trounces SL in Imperialism Debate." The postscript to the LRP's account reads: "We have no douht the Spartacists will claim to have won a great victory over the LRP in the dehate." It is difficult to imagine just how one could claim "great victory" on the basis of defending elementary Leninism and Trotskyism against the vicarious "Third World" nationalism and garden-variety reformist practice—occasionally masked by radical-sounding rhetoric—of this minuscule "third camp" outfit.

Frederick A. Praeger



Donald Press

WV Photo

LRP's founder/leader Sy Landy (right), a pale shadow of his anti-Soviet forebears Karl Kautsky (left) and Max Shachtman.

Given that the Trotskyist Spartacist League and the LRP were literally on opposite sides of the barricades during Cold War II, much of the debate necessarily had the quality of ships passing in the night. The LRP's forebears—the petty-bourgeois opposition led by Max Shachtman within the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1939-40—took flight from the Trotskyist program for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union under the pressures of petty-hourgeois puhlic opinion. SWP leader James P. Cannon's injunction that when you touch the Russian question, you touch the question of proletarian revolution—if you go wrong on the Russian question, you necessarily lose your compass and will deviate on every other key question—was fully borne out by the LRP's performance at the debate.

Der Spiegel

Lech Walesa oversees mass at Gdansk shipyards, 1980. LRP hailed Vatican/CIA-backed Solidarność counterrevolution in Poland.

As our comrade Don Alexander explained in his presentation at the debate (see page 7), the LRP's "theory" of "statified capitalism" goes hack to such renegades from Marxism as Karl Kautsky, who was a vehement opponent of the Russian Revolution. "State capitalism," in all its variants, does enormous violence to Marxism. It is neither based on scientific socialism nor does it explain or predict anything of value. It is merely a "theoretical" justification for capitulating to one's "own" hourgeoisie and ahandoning the defense of the most important gains of the international working class.

In our fight for working-class liheration, we uphold the beliefs and values of rational humanism which underlie Marxism. We stand by Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto* which stated: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." That is, that the fundamental division in modern society is hetween classes and their relationship to the means of production. Not so the LRP. With their grotesque and vicarious enthusing over ghetto upheavals and petty-hourgeois Arab nationalism, the LRP seeks to pander to those who share the 1960s New Left "white skin privilege" outlook—that the most fundamental division in the world is hetween the impoverished and oppressed dark-skinned peoples and the "privileged" white peoples in North America and West Europe. But where many New Leftists at least had a healthy gut hatred for the racist capitalist status quo, the LRP devotes its energies primarily to opportunist tailing after pro-Democratic Party "antiwar" movements and union-suing labor hureaucrats.

LRP: Trade Union Opportunism and Vicarious Nationalism

"Nothing would have dealt a hlow to Washington's war drive against Iraq than a strike shutting down the capital of world imperialism, and that's what almost happened last December when transit workers voted unanimously to strike," LRP speaker Matthew Richardson said in his presentation. True enough. But the LRP in its own small way helped boost New Directions (ND) leader Roger Toussaint, who deep-sixed a New York transit strike, into the presidency of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100. Speaking in support of the Spartacist League from the floor of the debate, a militant transit worker pointed out:

> "As soon as Toussaint and New Directions won, they continued courting the Democrats—Hittary Clinton, Schumer and all the candidates for mayor. Toussaint even invited the head of the PBA [Patrolmen's Benevolent Association] to speak at union rallies. After 9/11 this president—who the LRP supporter voted for—put American flags on every union T-shirt and button, supported the 'war on terror' and preached national unity."

The LRP's professed "anti-imperialism" has more to do with liberalism turned inside out than anything Lenin or Trotsky ever fought for. The LRP tails bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalism from the Near East to Ireland, promoting the notion of "progressive" and "reactionary" peoples—the latter having no rights, the former supposedly incapable of carrying out any atrocities (see "LRP: Apologists for Arab Nationalism," *WV* No. 796, 31 January). A Spartacist spokesman said from the floor:

> "We are for an international communist classless society. To that end, in Lenin's words, we are for the unity of the workers of all nations on the basis of class against class. That means we are against *all* national privilege, that means we are for the right to self-determination for *all* nations. Now, in a case of interpenetrated peoples—I know the LRP helieves that hourgeois democracy can accomplish wonders—but you cannot always get such democratic rights realized under capitalism. So, no, the democratic right of self-determination of the Hebrews and the Palestinian Arabs cannot be satisfied under capitalism. Your conclusion is one wins, the other loses. Our conclusion is international socialist revolution.
>
> "The LRP, aside from the Zionist Ministry of Information, are about the only two entities in the world who don't seem to acknowledge that Israel has several hundred nuclear weapons. So you want to deny them their national rights? Get those weapons!"

A young leftist speaking from the floor at the dehate was ignored by the LRP when he pointedly asked:

> "You claim that in the '48 war you took a side with the Arah hourgeoisie because they're anti-imperialist. How can the Arah hourgeoisie be anti-imperialist when the governments of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and pretty much every other Arab government in the Middle East was either a puppet government of either the French imperialists or the British imperialists?... How can they be anti-imperialist, and how can you say that Hebrew-speaking Jews, especially those that were forced to flee to Palestine by British imperialism and were kicked out of Europe and hanished and forced to go to Palestine after the Holocaust, how can you say that these people are no different than the Afrikaner fascists in South Africa? To me that's ludicrous. Your position of all Israel is occupied territory is basically saying, 'These people don't have a right to live'."

"Thank You, Greg"

In his presentation, Richardson intoned that although a united working-class struggle against racism is the "strongest and most preferable answer," "it's not going to happen any time soon and it would he criminal to tell black people to pin their hopes on an interracial defense that won't come in time to save them." God forbid the role of revolutionary leadership is to actually *fight* for such a strategy.

Instead, the audience was treated to the sickening spectacle of one after another LRP speaker hailing "ghetto riots" as a strategy for struggle. A former supporter of the Black Panther Party and new member of the Labor Black League, which is fraternally allied with the SL, commented after the dehate that the LRP sounded much like the "pork-chop nationalists" the Panthers denounced, and said: "I can't believe some of the LRP's rhetoric. Where are they in the hlack areas? They are armchair revolutionaries."

At the debate, a young woman cadre of the SL and Spartacus Youth Club explained, "The LRP looks to the black ghetto revolts because they don't see the possibility of building a revolutionary party that is integrated and internationalist. They say that black people should not wait for white workers, and they lump the white workers with the racist ruling class. This objectively helps the bourgeoisie to keep the working class divided."

In contrast, we fight to mobilize labor to defend the ghetto masses. During the 1992 upheaval in Los Angeles following the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King, the Partisan Defense Committee issued a statement declaring: "The working class must not allow the hlack population to be isolated—*the powerful L.A. unions such as langshore, nerospace and city warkers should organize wark stoppages and mass mobilizations to salidarize with and defend the black community* as the LAPD looks to spill more blood to 'celehrate' their racist victory over Rodney King" (see *WV* supplement, 4 May 1992). The statement also explained: "The point is not to seize articles of consumption but to expropriate the means of production. That's a big leap, representing the shift in consciousness from that of

continued on page 11

Forman/Boston Herald American

1976: As anti-busing racist mobs attacked black people on streets of Boston, LRP joined in denouncing busing for school integration.

Spartacist Speaker at LRP Debate

We Are the Party of the Russian Revolution!

We publish below, slightly edited, the Spartacist League presentation by SL Central Committee member Don Alexander at the May 10 debate with the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP).

Well, the spirit of the State Department is hovering in this room—and you just heard the speech, a "State Department socialist" speech. The League for the Revolutionary Party is a centrist, fake-Trotskyist organization—that is, revolutionary in words but opportunist in deeds—and an obstacle in the path of proletarian revolution. On every fundamental question confronting the proletariat and oppressed, they bend to the winds of prevailing petty-bourgeois radicalism and cover this over with revolutionary phrasemongering.

How can you be a genuine Trotskyist organization and embrace class-collaborationist unity with the reformists and the liberals in a so-called "common" struggle against war? How can you be a genuine Marxist party and support in the name of "democracy" imperialist-backed counterrevolution from East Europe to the former Soviet Union? And give "critical" support to trade-union bureaucrats who were installed by the Labor Department—which was the case with the so-called reform candidate Arnold Miller's Miners for Democracy in the 1970s?

WV Photo

New York, May 10: SL speaker Don Alexander addresses crowd of 200 which filled Musicians Union Hall to hear debate with LRP.

WV Photo

23 October 1999: Partisan Defense Committee-initiated labor/black mobilization of 10,000 to stop the KKK in NYC. LRP promoted "united front" with Latino cops and Democratic politicians who called for "tolerance for Klan."

The LRP promoted illusions in Roger Toussaint, whose New Directions outfit was boosted to power by a union-suing group, the Association for Union Democracy. This is a direct repudiation of the struggle for working-class independence from the capitalist state. The Spartacist League insisted that the out-bureaucrats that espouse more "democracy" but who embrace class collaborationism, such as Toussaint and New Directions, no less than the "old guard," would betray, sell out the workers struggle and subordinate the transit workers to the arrogant bosses and the Democratic Party and capitalist state.

Real Trotskyists tell the bitter truth to the masses. And unlike the LRP we don't tell the workers: "Hey, go ahead drink this poison. We know it's poison. If you wake up, we'll ask you, 'Now do you know it's poison?'" That's fighting for class independence for the LRP! Our role is to bring revolutionary consciousness into the labor movement. That's the job of a revolutionary party and that's what we do.

How can the LRP claim to be Trotskyist—that is, fighters for the oppressed—if they reject the fight for the most elementary democratic rights for black people, such as integration of the schools, which was centered on busing in the '70s? Busing was not a be-all and end-all, but nonetheless a partial step toward black equality which was won through struggle and not through judicial fiat.

How can the LRP claim the mantle of Trotskyism and justify crossing picket lines at Columbia University during a brief graduate student strike? The picket line is the battle line of the class struggle—not just for communists, but for trade unionists defending their unions—which at every step the capitalists seek to weaken, undermine and destroy. So you're not Trotskyists!

For Marxists, the struggle against imperialist war is necessarily a struggle against the capitalist system of production for profit, which is the root cause of war, racism, exploitation and oppression. The fight against imperialist war is part and parcel of the fight against the war against working people here at home. The working class, which produces the wealth of society, bears the full brunt of the attacks of the capitalists internationally, as the competing capitalist powers scramble for new markets, raw materials and spheres of investment—which is what imperialism is. Only the fight for a workers revolution that seizes control of society's productive forces from the capitalists and reorganizes society on the basis of economic planning for need can prevent future interimperialist wars like World War I and World War II.

The Russian Question: The Question of Revolution

I want to briefly address how the world got to this point in which the nuclear madmen of bloody U.S. imperialism run roughshod over the working class and oppressed of the entire planet. And in that regard, the LRP has performed a certain valuable service in a small way in terms of the present state of affairs. How so? At every juncture, they haven't missed an opportunity to express an anti-Communist loyalty oath to the American imperialists. In general, like their political godfathers Burnham and Shachtman in the Socialist Workers Party [SWP] in 1940, which I will get into in a minute, they have deserted Trotskyism and Marxism by supporting in the name of "democracy" the capitalists' rollback of the gains of the October Revolution.

Before they came up with their ingenious theory that Russia was a "statified capitalist society," there were others who had beat them to the punch, who had promulgated similar pro-bourgeois democracy rubbish—like the German ex-Marxist Karl Kautsky, a staunch opponent of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution which swept away capitalism and parliamentary horsetrading and replaced it with the soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers deputies, the democratically elected councils that administered the revolutionary workers government. This was the dictatorship of the proletariat that took power out of the hands of the capitalists.

Lenin and revolutionary internationalists like the German communist and Spartacist Rosa Luxemburg, they had Kautsky's number. They knew that the centrist politics that he espoused were dangerous, even more so than the reformists. The reformists were openly for reforming and saving the capitalist order, whereas centrists like Kautsky in practice stood for the same thing but fooled some workers with their quasi-Marxist phrases. In *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* [1918], Lenin polemicized against Kautsky, the LRP's ideological forebear: "It is natural for a liberal to speak of 'democracy' in general: but a Marxist will never forget to ask: 'for what class?'"

It's important to study the Russian Revolution—the only successful workers revolution in history—led by the Bolsheviks who built a vanguard party that was a tribune of the people, that fought against all aspects of social oppression. Now there's a lot to say about the Russian Revolution and the subsequent political degeneration.

In the 1930s, Leon Trotsky (and also James P. Cannon, who was one of the

continued on page 8

Y Khaldei

Red Army marches into Austria in 1945. Trotskyists defended Soviet Union and hailed victory over Nazi Germany. LRP doesn't.

Spartacist...

(continued from page 7)

founders of the American Communist Party and of American Trotskyism) presented a very useful comparison of the Soviet Union, comparing it to a gigantic trade union that had fallen under reactionary leadership. Just like we defend the unions—which were gains for the working class wrested from the capitalists—against the blows of the capitalist exploiters while we also work to replace their class-collaborationist leadership with revolutionary leadership, so too was it necessary to defend the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism and capitalist restoration.

For the Spartacist League, for the International Communist League, the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union was an unprecedented defeat for the international working class. The consequences of the counterrevolution have been total economic collapse; production has fallen at least 50 percent since 1991, capital investment by 90 percent. Today a third of the urban labor force in Russia is effectively unemployed; 75 percent of the population lives below or barely above subsistence level and 15 million people are actually starving.

Life expectancy has fallen dramatically and now stands at a mere 59 years for men, below what it was a century ago, while the overall population actually declined by three and half million from 1992 to 1997. More and more women are forced into prostitution and into being sex slaves and have borne the brunt of the devastating poverty and unemployment. HIV/AIDS has reached astronomical levels and is catching up with the rates of sub-Saharan Africa; and a 16-year-old boy today has less chance to survive to age 60 than in the benighted filth of tsarist Russia!

So now even the LRP has to acknowledge that something has happened in the USSR. Now they claim *after the fact* that somehow Stalin's so-called "counterrevolution" of the '30s did not erase all of the gains of the Bolshevik Revolution. Of course, they never once defended these putative gains when they were under attack by capitalist restorationists. For the LRP, the capitalist counterrevolution was a victory. They say in their article, "Twenty Years of the LRP," [*Proletarian Revolution*, Winter 1997]: "The class struggle received a magnificent shot in the arm when the grip of the Stalinists in the West as well as in the East was shattered." Well, you should tell that to the impoverished masses of Russia and East Europe who have experienced the "shock and awe" of free-market immiseration.

Moreover, the consciousness of the working class as a result of capitalist counterrevolution has reverted back to pre-Marxist doctrines such as anarchism and syndicalism—which reject the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the struggle for working-class state power

Agins/NYTimes

LRP Leaflet 19 Oct. 2000

VOTE FOR NEW DIRECTIONS — BUT DON'T TRUST THEM FOR A SECOND!

Despite New Directions's conservative electoral approach, workers are so fed up with the current misleaders that they are lining up behind ND. Most of the members correctly believe ND to be much less crooked than the old guard. Further, ND, after much

LRP urged vote for Roger Toussaint, here embracing MTA chairman Peter Kalikow last December after spiking potential transit strike.

WV Photos

Spartacist displays document centrality of fight for black liberation through socialist revolution in the U.S.

led by internationalist Leninist vanguard parties. We of the Spartacist League and International Communist League uniquely fought against capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, in defense of the gains of the October Revolution. We fight today for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states in China, in Cuba, in North Korea and Vietnam. We fight for proletarian political revolutions to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies which undermine the defense of those states against imperialism. In short, we struggle for new October Revolutions.

The October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution smashed the capitalist system and gave the struggle for socialism flesh and blood reality. It inspired the working class and oppressed worldwide to intensify the struggle to get rid of their own exploiters. It proved in real life the superiority of a collectivized property system, a planned economy, over the irrational boom-bust system of capitalism.

Shachtman's Snotty Grandchildren

We are Trotskyists because Trotsky—the co-leader with Lenin of the October Revolution—waged a fight against the subsequent political degeneration of the revolution, against the Stalinist bureaucracy, by fighting for the return to the proletarian, revolutionary, internationalist program that animated that revolution. He fought for that program to the very end of his life.

In the pamphlet written by Trotsky, "The Class Nature of the Soviet State" [1933], he had organizations such as the LRP in mind when he said, "To these gentlemen the dictatorship of the proletariat is simply an imponderable concept, an ideal norm not to be realized upon our sinful planet. Small wonder that 'theoreticians' of this stripe, insofar as they do not denounce altogether the very word dictatorship, strive to smear over the irreconcilable contradiction between the latter and bourgeois democracy."

Trotsky's last great fight was against a petty-bourgeois opposition in the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S. led by the direct political forebears of the League for a Revolutionary Party. Max Shachtman, James Burnham and Marty Abern split from the American Trotskyist movement in 1940. This was in the period in which there was anti-Communist hysteria following the 1939 Hitler-Stalin Pact and the Soviet invasion of capitalist Finland and Poland at the outbreak of World War II. Shachtman repudiated the Trotskyist program for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and the LRP has throughout its existence followed in his footsteps.

In close collaboration with Trotsky, Cannon fought against this petty-bourgeois anti-Soviet opposition in the Socialist Workers Party that abandoned the defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism. In defense of this revolutionary program, Cannon had the following to say about the gains of the October Revolution in his "Speech on the Russian Question" in 1939:

> "The mighty power of the October revolution is shown by the vitality of its conquests. The nationalized property and the planned economy stood up under all the difficulties and pressures of the capitalist encirclement and all the blows of a reactionary bureaucracy at home. In the Soviet Union, despite the monstrous mismanagement of the bureaucracy, we saw a tremendous development of the productive forces—and in a backward country at that—while capitalist economy declined. Conclusion: Nationalized and planned economy, made possible by a revolution that overthrew the capitalists and landlords, is infinitely superior, more progressive. It shows the way forward. Don't give it up before it is lost! Cling to it and defend it!"

And that is exactly what the Spartacist League and the ICL did and have continued to fight for.

The LRP actually wrote something on this fight, trying to claim it as their own. They happened to omit one tiny little detail—it was over the Russian question! In *The Struggle for the Revolutionary Party*, they wrote, "Trotsky, shortly before his murder at Stalin's hands, had waged a critical faction fight in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the American section of the Fourth International, against the Shachtmanite minority who traitorously split the party on the eve of World War II."

The fact that they made no reference to the Russian question which was at the heart of this "critical faction fight" is not surprising. There's a certain method at work in this clumsy and pathetic attempt to evade the fact that their side was the side of the petty-bourgeois, pro-imperialist, anti-Soviet opposition whose progeny they are.

Our tradition is that of the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution embodied in the program of Leninism and Trotskyism—the continuation of revolutionary internationalism. In the post-Soviet world, we fight to forge the vital instrument for leading a fight for new October Revolutions: a Leninist vanguard party, a tribune of the people, which the LRP contemptuously rejects as an organization of "condescending saviors."

Class Collaboration in the Antiwar Movement

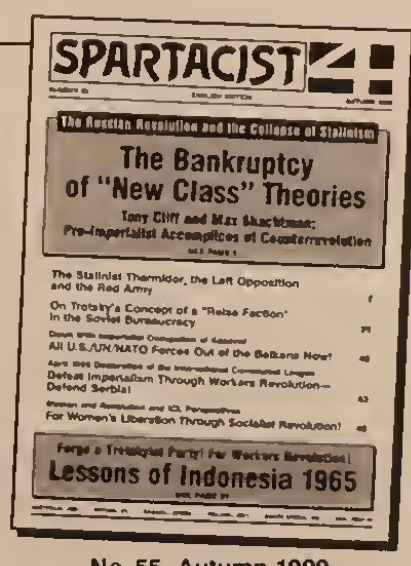
Our fighting program is class against class, which is directly counterposed to the reformist and centrist swindle of "unity" of all opponents of war. Unity with whom, against whom and for what? That's the Leninist way of posing the question. We fought for a revolutionary, proletarian, internationalist perspective in the face of U.S. imperialism's war preparations against Iraq, for military defense of semicolonial Iraq. We call for an end to the racist colonial occupation—for U.S. and allied troops out!

The LRP charges us with being sectarian and for not understanding that there is a distinction between the movement and the leadership, and says that we're against united fronts. You wouldn't know that we were at several demonstrations with our Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents—organized and led by the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Labor Black Leagues—to tear militant youth and working people away from the class-collaborationist program of the ANSWER organizers who steered the struggle into the arms of the Democratic Party. We called for: "All U.S troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!" Our class-struggle program drew a sharp class line against the pro-imperialist pacifists, the bourgeois liberals and reformists. Our program is for the defeat of imperialism through proletarian revolution; the chief means in fighting for military defense is to mobilize the working class here at home.

The LRP talks out of both sides of their mouths. They struck an oppositional posture. They called for "the defeat of imperialism and the defense of the Iraqi people in any war against the imperialist powers" [*Proletarian Revolution*, Fall 2002]. However, they champion unity with the very forces keeping the struggle against war separated from the struggle against capitalism and thereby subordinated to the bourgeoisie. Referring to these antiwar coalitions, they say, "We need also to fight for them to be built as genuine united fronts, where all voices are heard, including that of revolutionaries—not just those who support the Democrats and other pro-imperialist liberals."

Okay. We are for genuine united fronts—march separately, strike together is the slogan—and not class-collaborationist antiwar coalitions based upon unity with the political representatives of the bourgeoisie. Examples of this: our demonstration last year in the Bay Area which was centered on defense of immigrant rights and against the Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act, based upon the heavily black longshore union, the ILWU; the Spartacus Youth Clubs had many demonstrations against the racist apologist for slavery, David Horowitz; the recent Spartacus Youth Club united-front demonstration against the ROTC at UC Berkeley, and many others. But they know of this—it's just that they hate our Leninist program underlying these struggles.

The LRP's version of real "united fronts" is a caricature and perversion of Trotskyism, which is based upon the fight to mobilize the working class and oppressed ***independently*** of the capitalist exploiters and their agents. It was Lenin



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and the Bolsheviks who taught us that the precondition for a revolutionary struggle against imperialist war is embodied in Lenin's call "to break with the chauvinists and rally about the old banner of Marxism—such is the task of the day" ["Socialism and War," 1915]. Yeah—and that is the task of today. And they made a revolution.

Well, that was then and now is now, right? In practice, the role of the LRP is politically indistinguishable from garden-variety opportunists. They act as a left cover for the social-chauvinist outfits, which means that they played a role of keeping the struggle against imperialism within the bounds of the capitalist system. It's all nicey-nicey: unite with and preach unity with the liberals who called for UN sanctions—we're all part of this one common movement. This is a class-collaborationist program, all right, and it stands in the way of the fight to mobilize the working class against the murderous U.S. imperialists!

We are critical and objective-minded toward everything and everybody including ourselves, as anyone who regularly reads *Workers Vanguard* knows. We don't trifle with the dearly paid lessons of proven dead-end strategies of the class struggles of the past. And if we look at the proven dead-end strategies that have derailed class struggles, for instance from the Spanish Revolution to Chile in the '70s, such popular-frontist programs which unite the workers with the so-called progressive elements of the bourgeoisie—this has a particular name in this country: it's called the Democratic Party and fomenting, creating illusions in that party. In fighting against the assortment of centrists in the '30s, Trotsky noted that you can spot them a mile away by their sins of commission and omission.

Reuters

AP

Can you spot which side represents social progress? The LRP can't. Left: Women's militia fighters in Kabul during Soviet intervention against CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan. Right: Women in *burka*s following withdrawal of Red Army.

New York Times

During Harlem cop riot in 1964, Spartacists initiated rally in NYC garment district to mobilize labor in defense of ghetto masses.

We in the Spartacist League and the ICL, we are welded together by a common internationalist program and during these demonstrations against the U.S. war in Iraq, our comrades worldwide fought for a revolutionary internationalist program. Check out the ICL's declaration on the war against Iraq ["Defend Iraq Against U.S. and Allied Imperialist Attack!" *WV* No. 790, 1 November 2002]. We took head-on the prevailing illusions in each country of "national unity," from South Africa to Japan to Germany, France and England.

"Third Camp" = Camp of Imperialism

The LRP's professed stand for the defeat of imperialism is a manifest fraud. You can't wage a revolutionary struggle against U.S. and world imperialism and support capitalist counterrevolution. Like all of the advocates of the so-called "new class" theories, which is nothing but a rationale for capitulating to imperialism, they supported bourgeois reaction and capitalist counterrevolution all down the line. They were on the other side of the barricades time and again, from supporting the so-called "Iranian Revolution" of Khomeini in 1979, the imperialist-backed Islamic reaction in Afghanistan against the Red Army, the anti-Semitic, woman-hating, clerical-nationalist CIA-backed Solidarność [in Poland] to their support to Yeltsin-Bush capitalist counterrevolution.

Yeah, we hailed the Red Army in Afghanistan, which opened up the possibility of the extension of the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples, especially to the hideously oppressed women. The Soviet intervention posed in the first instance the defense of the USSR against a CIA-backed insurgency on its southern flank. The Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy intervened at the request of a left-nationalist government which implemented modest reforms on behalf of women in terms of reducing the bride price, curbing the power of the woman-hating reactionary caste of mullahs and teaching girls, schoolgirls, to read and write. This was an integral part of our program of unconditional military defense of the USSR and for workers political revolution against the sellout bureaucracy.

We opposed the CIA-, Vatican- and White House-backed Solidarność counterrevolutionary bid for power and the Yeltsin-Bush capitalist counterrevolution, which they embrace. Boris Yeltsin, you know, the Russian-chauvinist demagogue who as Moscow party chief in the mid 1980s legalized the fascist Pamyat organization. That's the scum they supported. We actively fought against capitalist counterrevolution, which included distributing over 100,000 leaflets in Moscow in order to defeat it ["Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" *WV* No. 533, 30 August 1991]. The LRP on the other hand, would have "tactically lined up in a military bloc with Yeltsin"—and with Yeltsin's sponsors and advisers in the White House and CIA.

The LRP sang the praises of the bankers' union, Polish Solidarność, which was so beloved by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher and the Vatican and Western imperialism. We were for spiking Solidarność' counterrevolutionary bid for power, and right here in New York City the *Wall Street Journal* warned against the Spartacists demonstrating in the streets against Solidarność. We supported Jaruzelski's military coup against counterrevolutionary Solidarność. This was a straightforward application of Trotsky's position as laid out in the Transitional Program, wherein Trotsky envisioned the possibility of revolutionaries making "a 'united front' with the Thermidorian section of the bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counterrevolution." In so doing, the revolutionaries "would nevertheless defend not the Bonapartist clique but the social base of the USSR, the property wrenched away from the capitalists and transformed into state property." We also indicted the Polish Stalinists for having driven the historically socialist Polish proletariat into the arms of nationalism and clerical reaction, and called for the forging of a genuine Trotskyist party.

As I pointed out, we unconditionally defend the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states of China, Cuba, Vietnam—the collectivized property and the planned economy—against imperialism. What about the LRP? They claim to defend North Korea and its right to nuclear weapons. But what is the concrete content of this "defense"? Well, they write, they advocate "an all-Korean constituent assembly to forge reunification" [*Proletarian Revolution*, Spring 1997]. This is a call for capitalist reunification, at least implicitly. We as Trotskyists are for the *revolutionary* reunification of Korea—through proletarian political revolution in the North and socialist revolution in the South. This is directly linked to the fight for proletarian power in Japan.

You know, these questions are what your program is; and how you try to evade it, that's the historic role of centrism—as the embodiment of "crystallized confusion"—to blur the class line, to confuse, deceive and demoralize workers, to paralyze potential revolutionary action against the exploiters. The North Korean deformed workers state, which is led by a nepotistic Stalinist bureaucracy which is pretty bizarre, is regarded by U.S. imperialism as part of the "axis of evil" which sooner or later will include China. They don't defend the ***workers states*** which were the product of social revolutions against capitalism.

How about China, which they barely write about. The gains of the Chinese Revolution hang in the balance. They claim that the 1949 Revolution was a bourgeois-democratic revolution "of sorts" and a defeat for imperialism. Except, hey, which side would they have been on in 1949, you know, in this "bourgeois-democratic revolution"? Which side would they have been on in Korea? We know what the Shachtmanite history is on these questions. On the ground, with regard to China, they're with the spirit of Seattle in 1999. They've written a heap of praise about that despite the fact that those protests were stamped by anti-Communist, anti-Chinese racist protectionism by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy; they dumped Chinese steel.

Trotskyism isn't some kind of "united front" against Stalinism, or "anti-Stalinism." Cannon pointed out that there is a profound misconception on this score that will lead you straight into the arms of the bourgeoisie. Stalinophobia isn't simply hatred for the labor camps, the purges and the like. "What is Stalinophobia?...Is it the opinion that Stalinism is not the leader of the international revolution but its mortal enemy? No, that is not Stalinophobia.... This sentiment goes wrong only when it leads to reconciliation with American imperialism, and to the assignment of the fight against Stalinism to that same imperialism." Cannon was speaking similarly to Trotsky, who pointed out in "Once Again: The USSR and Its Defense" [1937]: "The proletariat has sufficient reasons to overthrow and to chase out the Stalinist bureaucracy, corrupt to the bone. But precisely because of that it cannot directly or indirectly leave this task to Hitler or to the Mikado. Stalin overthrown by the workers—that's a great step forward toward socialism. Stalin crushed by the imperialists—that's the counter-revolution triumphant."

The Myth of "Statified Capitalism"

You get a glimpse of the Stalinophobes when you read the LRP's recent article, "Theories of Stalinism's Collapse" [*Proletarian Revolution*, Fall 2002], which is a miserable manifesto of self-congratulatory hoopla in defense of capitalist counterrevolution and is rich in centrist charlatanry. Nowhere does it even mention, much less take up, Trotsky's *Revolution Betrayed*, the decisive Marxist analysis of Stalinism and the degenerated workers state. To justify their support to Yeltsin in this piece, they claim that Trotsky supported the bourgeois Spanish republic against the fascists. This was no slip of the pen—it represents their consistent embellishment of bourgeois democracy and unremitting hostility to red revolution everywhere. It is a slander against the Trotskyists, who while fighting for ***military*** support to the Republican forces did not support the capitalist government.

So why have they invented this slander and lie? Well, they don't want to talk about the tradition that they stand in. Their social-democratic anti-communism is nothing new. Theirs is the tradition of Karl Kautsky, as I pointed out earlier. Both Kautsky and the anarchists were hostile to the Bolsheviks and maintained that Soviet Russia under Lenin and Trotsky was economically a "state capitalist" system in which the Communist bureaucrats exploited the workers. The LRP, as I said, call it "statified capitalism." According to them, state capitalism in the Soviet Union was a "necessary prop" for the world imperialist system, which implicitly denies the reality of the Cold War and the historical possibility of the restoration of private ownership of the means of production. It also ignores the key role of Western, and centrally American, imperialism in the capitalist counterrevolution, for example, in the former USSR.

There is a methodological similarity between Stalinist ideology and the theoretical framework of the Stalinophobic splits from the Trotskyist movement. The Shachtmanites, the Cliffites, the LRP—and all their progeny for that matter—they date the transformation of the USSR from a workers state to a new form of class exploitation with the consolidation of the Stalin regime between the late 1920s and the mid-to-late '30s. In a converse but parallel way, the Maoists date the restoration of "capitalism" in the USSR with the replacement of the Stalin regime by the "revisionist" Khrushchev in the mid-to-late '50s.

The methodological similarity between the Stalinists and the Maoists and Shachtman is made clear in our pamphlet, *Why*

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the USSR Is Not Capitalist: "Stalin and Shachtman shared a common identification of the *political* character of the ruling party or group with the *dominant social class* represented by the state."

So we should look at what this has to do with the imperialist war. Well, you can't claim to have a consistent revolutionary program for the overthrow of capitalism if you capitulate to your own ruling class all down the line, as I've pointed out. The LRP provided a left cover for the reformists in the antiwar movement and also they've been marching in lockstep with certain black Democrats like Charles Rangel, the black Democratic Party Congressman who called for the reinstitution of the draft. Rangel said we need a draft because we need equality of sacrifice for the rich and the poor. This is a gross attempt to whip up black support for a racist colonial war against Iraq. And it's been met by contempt by a lot of the black victims of racist American imperialism, who are calling it a white man's war. One expects that from the likes of Rangel or some other capitalist politician, who tries to enlist blacks and minorities as cannon fodder for the imperialist military.

Genuine communists historically have opposed conscription, and we say today in the spirit of revolutionaries like German communist Karl Liebknecht did during World War I, "Not a man, not a penny for the imperialist military." Not so the LRP which has discovered the virtue of a conscripted army. They actually go so far as to oppose the demand "No to the draft" and try to give that a socialist veneer, about how you have to learn how to use arms. They even have the nerve to quote Lenin—he's rolling in his grave onto the sidewalk by now. In fact, Lenin never called for a conscripted army. In his pamphlet, "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution" [1916] on this question he says, "We are not in favour of a bourgeois militia; we are in favour only of a proletarian militia. Therefore, 'not a penny, not a man,' not only for a standing army, but even for a bourgeois militia, even in countries like the United States, or Switzerland, Norway, etc." And also the LRP picked up one of Trotsky's weakest positions—the Proletarian Military Policy, which called for "workers control of conscription"—and turned it into a reformist caricature. We say hands off Lenin and Trotsky, you centrist swindlers! You trample underfoot their most fundamental Marxist teachings on the class nature of the state, the need to smash the rule of the bourgeoisie and fight for working-class revolution.

Roberto Schmidt

Demonstration of Arab villagers in northern Iraq who were displaced by Kurds who were earlier displaced by Arabs. Which is the "reactionary" people and which the "progressive" by LRP's lights?

Lior Mizrahi/BauBau

May 15 demonstration of Israel Aircraft workers during massive public employees strike in Israel. LRP rejects fight for class unity of Hebrew and Arab workers in favor of appeals to Arab bourgeoisies.

Revolutionary Integrationism: The Fight for Black Liberation

Let me just make a couple of other points. The LRP supports the integration of blacks into the imperialist armed forces. However, they oppose the struggle for integration. And you heard that, I don't have to repeat that. Because really what they're doing with their program of so-called proletarian interracialism is to chase behind the black separatist, pseudo-nationalists and they cite Karl Marx and they cite C.L.R. James, the former SWPer and centrist, in support of their wretched accommodation to the racist status quo. Here's what they say about Marx in justification of their position in their pamphlet on interacialism [Sy Landy, *Marxism, Interracialism and the Black Struggle*], "Marx and Engels strongly advocated assimilation as a means to effectively build and consolidate the capitalist nation-state. However, Western capitalism's decisive transformation from its progressive epoch into in its imperialist epoch has turned everything around for Leninists. To apply the assimilationist outlook today is a direct capitulation to imperialism; it is dangerous advice to oppressed peoples who in this epoch will not be allowed to assimilate."

No, no, no, no! What is dangerous nonsense is for a so-called Marxist organization to rail against the fight for integration, the fight against forced segregation in racist capitalist America. Moreover, what you referred to about the age of imperialism—precisely at the end of the 19th century, the rise of American imperialism saw the resurgence of racist reaction in this country. You had a certain person, a conservative black capitalist spokesman named Booker T. Washington, who was pushing segregation, and he was warmly embraced by the racist capitalist exploiters.

So the LRP also claims that white workers are a "labor aristocracy," which means that they're bought off, and they lump them with the white racist rulers. This is how they put it: "Black workers no longer have to wait upon whether or not white workers will lead a struggle or not. Black—and Latino—workers are now strategically placed in major industries and in the dominant cities. Their militancy and their actions can be a decisive pole in what the white workers do." This is a pseudo-leftist rejection of the centrality of the working class in the fight to abolish the racist capitalist system. If white and black workers don't have common interests, which means a common fight against the racist exploiters, then you drive the white workers into the arms of the white ruling class and, at worst, the fascists!

How can any serious struggle for proletarian power be undertaken by an organization that has just consigned a significant section of the American working class to the scrap heap! In the late 1960s, when the radical-nationalist League of Revolutionary Black Workers refused to hand out their leaflets at Detroit auto factories to white workers, this was a big blow against working-class unity, and a missed opportunity to win them to a program of revolutionary struggle. So this is what the LRP passes off as revolutionary strategy in the imperialist epoch. What a gift to the violent, bloody U.S. imperialist ruling class. The American government must be saying: Hey, give us some more socialists like that!

For Trotskyists, the fight for black liberation is strategic to the American revolution, and black oppression is the bedrock of American capitalism. There will be no proletarian revolution unless the most conscious workers are won to the banner of black liberation through proletarian revolution. This is ABC for communists—a revolutionary workers party that champions the interests of all the oppressed and exploited. In many ways today, the conditions of the black masses are even worse than at the time of the civil rights movement. So our program of revolutionary integrationism—for the assimilation of blacks in an egalitarian socialist order—means fighting for power. And it speaks to the felt needs of millions of people.

Concluding on this point, I just want to point out our long history of struggle fighting for black freedom: for over 20 years our history of successful labor-black mobilizations against the Klan, which in most instances involved a struggle against black Democratic Party politicians; our fight for black people to even be served at Denny's restaurants; to our long history rallying for Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) and Mumia Abu-Jamal, ex-Panthers, our fight for all class-war prisoners—MOVE members and Jerry Dale Lowe, the white miner in jail.

When we fought for labor-black defense to defend busing against white racist mobs, we were standing in the Leninist tradition, with Lenin's Bolsheviks. In Lenin's pamphlet ["The Nationality of Pupils in Russian Schools," 1913], he pointed out that: "We must strive to secure the *mixing* of the children of *all* nationalities in *uniform* schools in each locality." So this is the tradition we stand in, and I can develop this a little more.

The LRP rejects the liberating ideals of communism which animated the Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. Internationalist unity of the proletariat is ABC for communists, for real, revolutionary Marxists—that is, Trotskyists. They have reaffirmed their advocacy, in fact, of national war as against internationalist class struggle in their reply to us with regard to the Near East. They continue to call on the Arab bourgeoisie to arm the Palestinians—the same capitalist rulers who have slaughtered thousands of Palestinians and oppress women, religious and national minorities. They uphold their support of the Arab rulers in the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967. They claim to defend the Palestinians, but they tie them to their worst enemies and lyingly denounce us as Zionists for upholding class unity against all of the exploiters in the Near East. This is their standard mode of operation.

We defend the Palestinians; we call for the Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories, and we have consistently pointed out that where you have two peoples competing for the same territory, under capitalism there cannot be a democratic resolution of competing national claims. This is what we refer to as interpenetrated peoples. So we fight for a socialist federation of the Near East, which means fighting for the building of internationalist Trotskyist parties to overthrow the sheiks and the colonels and the nationalist strongmen and Zionist rulers. The struggle for the overthrow of the bloody Zionist rulers from within means winning the Hebrew-speaking working class from Zionism and it means championing social and national liberation for the dispossessed and horrifically oppressed Palestinian masses. While this is going to be a very difficult struggle, obviously that's the only program that's in the objective interests of the working class and oppressed in the Near East.

For the LRP, there is no Hebrew-speaking nation—"All Israel is Occupied Territory!" Ultimately this is a program of genocidal irredentism. It is also a repudiation of the Leninist program of self-determination and equality of all nations, peoples and languages. How can anybody deny that Israel is a class-divided society except for crazed Zionists, petty-bourgeois Arab nationalists and those like the LRP. Why, if there is no Hebrew-speaking nation, do you have 700,000 Israeli workers—Hebrew and Arab workers organized in the Histadrut—on strike against their own government? The LRP expresses the petty-bourgeois despair about breaking Hebrew-speaking workers from their rulers—which is not going to happen overnight and as we pointed out is going to require massive class struggles in that region. But if you don't have national rights—what are they saying? That the Hebrew-speaking people don't have a right to live, the right to be.

We've written many articles on the fight for the liberation of women in Iraq, against the persecution of Egyptian gays, the oppression of the Berbers, Kurds, etc., because we are really fighting to forge a world party of socialist revolution—a reforged Fourth International and an organization that Trotsky would recognize as his own.■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
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Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
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3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

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Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
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Tues. 6:30-8:30 p.m.
and Sat. 1-5 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

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Oakland, CA 94604
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Sat. 1-5 p.m.
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LRP...

(continued from page 6)

outraged poor people to that of conscious and organized working people."

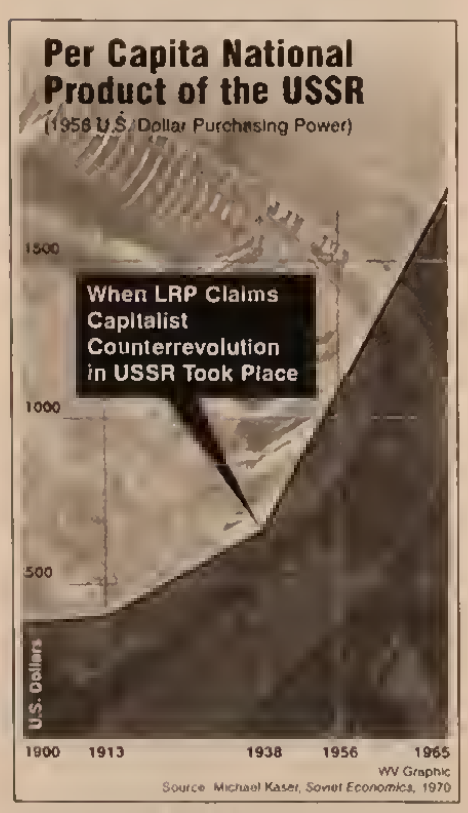
An SL floor speaker ripped apart the LRP's empty cheering over the ghetto upheavals:

> "Yes, there are spontaneous outbursts of rage and yes, they are understandable. And from '64 on, we defended them. 1964: we stand with the ghetto masses in defense but recognize that this is not a program. 1964 we organized a defense rally when Harlem was under siege by the cops—a thousand in the garment center. We sought labor defense of the ghetto masses, linking the ghetto to the factory floor where minority workers have real social power....
>
> "Look at the neighborhoods where those ghetto rebellions happened. What was the outcome? Whole swathes of neighborhoods destroyed and never rebuilt. We care about the people that were killed and we care about those destroyed neighborhoods. Not you!
>
> "What was the real gain of those rebellions? Black mayors, Democratic Party mayors in cities across the country for the purpose of keeping a lid on struggle. One of those mayors, Wilson Goode, ordered the bombing of the MOVE family in 1985. We held a defense rally in their support. You came and spit on it!"

Richardson's summary remarks exposed just how despairing the LRP's nonexistent program for black liberation is: Spartacist spokesmen from the floor nailed the LRP for promoting as a "united front" an October 1999 "tolerance for the Klan" demonstration in New York City built by Democratic politician Al Sharpton, the International Socialist Organization and ...the cops of the Latino Officers Association (LOA), who even invited the race-terrorists to share their sound system. This was organized in explicit opposition to the "Stop the Klan" labor/black mobilization initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee. Richardson devoted a fair chunk of his summary to trying to justify the LRP's support for a "united front" with the LOA cops in order to "expose" them! In the aftermath of the NYPD killing of black unionist Alberta Spruill, the LRP issued a leaflet lamenting that Sharpton, as "the city's most prominent opponent of police brutality," had failed to lead the struggle against Mayor Bloomberg.

To cover their tracks, the LRP routinely tries to portray the SL as racist, Zionist, "first-world chauvinist," etc. One of their speakers at the debate claimed that we have a line "like Pat Buchanan's" on immigration. A Spartacist spokesman refuted this garbage:

> "Every country where we have a section, we are known for our fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. The LRP's call for unlimited immigration and before that for open borders is basically a call on the imperialist nation-state to dissolve itself—not unusual for a group that calls on the bourgeois state to provide full employment and even to expropriate itself. This is counterposed to Leninism. And Lenin specifically polemicized against 'Open the frontiers.' Behind the LRP's line is the premise that the imperialist order can be made more democratic and egalitarian."



"Statified capitalism" idiocy. Enormous Soviet economic growth was result of planned economy.

What Lurks Behind the Three Dots?

In their attempt to claim Lenin's authority for their vicarious support to Arab nationalism and their denial of the national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people, the LRP stoops to grossly censoring Lenin's words. We reprint below a passage from Lenin's "The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1915). In its handout "Spartacism vs. Bolshevism: A Selection of Quotations" the LRP published only the shaded passages, replacing with three dots the unshaded excerpts calling for consistent democracy and equal rights for all nations.

"The focal point in the Social-Democratic programme must be that division of nations into oppressor and oppressed which forms the *essence* of imperialism, and is *deceitfully* evaded by the social-chauvinists and Kautsky. This division is not significant from the angle of bourgeois pacifism or the philistine Utopia of peaceful competition among independent nations under capitalism, but it is most significant from the angle of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. It is from this division that *our* definition of the "right of nations to self-determination" must follow, a definition that is consistently democratic, revolutionary, and *in accord* with the general task of the immediate struggle for socialism. It is for that right, and in a struggle to achieve sincere recognition for it, that the Social-Democrats of the oppressor nations must demand that the oppressed nations should have the right of secession, for otherwise recognition of equal rights for nations and of international working-class solidarity would in fact be merely empty phrase-mongering, sheer hypocrisy. On the other hand, the Social-Democrats of the oppressed nations must attach prime significance to the unity and the merging of the workers of the oppressed nations with those of the oppressor nations; otherwise these Social-Democrats will involuntarily become the allies of their own national *bourgeoisie*, which *always* betrays the interests of the people and of democracy, and is *always* ready, in its turn, to annex territory and oppress other nations."

For us Marxists, debates are an opportunity for a clash of political opinions aimed at clarifying differences within the workers movement and raising the consciousness of workers and radicalized youth. With its lies and slanders, the LRP degrades polemical debate with the aim of obfuscation and confusion. They have whined that none of their "five questions" were answered at the debate. The LRP's "questions"—like "Are you for Israeli minority apartheid rule or Israeli ethnic cleansing?"—were politically analogous to "when did you stop beating your wife?" In fact, a young activist around the Black Radical Congress told us afterward that he left the debate early because he could no longer stomach the LRP's fabrications.

Lies and slanders are but the opening step to encouraging and justifying violence against political opponents in the workers movement. The Stalinophobic LRP apes the methodology of the Stalinists—though with its tiny handful of followers, the LRP could hardly emulate Stalin. It was impossible for Stalin to defend his anti-revolutionary doctrine of "socialism in one country" from any Marxist vantage point. When lying was no longer sufficient, Stalin brought down the fist of violence.

As a footnote to the above: while smearing the SL as anti-immigrant chauvinists, the LRP embraced an "independent" speaker who *is* an anti-immigrant chauvinist—one Greg Butler of Gangbox: Construction Workers News Service. In his tirade, Butler ridiculed the notion of "some unity between black and white workers" in integrating the construction trades, instead lauding the use of "baseball bats and chains" and "busting heads." The next LRP speaker began his comments by saying, "Thank you, Greg, for your contribution." Another LRP speaker said, "I want to really solidarize with what Greg said."

Perhaps the LRP also solidarizes with what Greg says on his Gangbox Web site? In a 29 December 1999 posting, Butler acknowledges that his "baseball bats" were an auxiliary to the use of anti-union lawsuits under the auspices of "an unlikely ally, one Richard M. Nixon" and his administration's union-busting "preferential hiring" Philadelphia Plan. And in response to an Internet letter dated 3 October 2002 insisting that "if the 'workers of the world' are to unite, we need to rise above the borderline mentality," Butler replied the next day that "mass immigration benefits BOSSES on both sides of the border, and hurts WORKERS on both sides of the border." On 5 October 2002, he stressed the need to "disable the flow of cheap labor that depresses wages and working conditions." In the same posting, Butler ranted: "Ever wonder why the jails in every state (even heavily White states like Oregon) are packed with Black men? It's in large part due to immigration"!

"First World" chauvinism, indeed!

BT & IG: Bringing Up the LRP's Rear

While disgusting charges of "chauvinism" and worse were flung with abandon by the LRP and speakers sympathetic to them, the LRP had backup from other quarters, namely the Bolshevik Tendency (BT) and the Internationalist Group (IG). The BT chimed in, attacking "the Spartacist League's adaptation to social-patriotism." Not to be left out, an IG spokesman attacked us for "capitulation to U.S. imperialism," ad nauseam.

While the BT and IG formally disagree with the Shachtmanites of the LRP on the Russian question, they have much in common. The BT cut and ran from our hard Soviet-defensist line at the start of Cold War II in the 1980s. And the IG was sent spiraling into cyberspace and a global search for alien class forces in the aftermath of the destruction of the Soviet Union, having despaired at the prospect of winning the working class to revolutionary consciousness. This debate between the anti-Soviet LRP and the Trotskyist SL clearly put the IG in a bind. IG *supremo* Jan Norden had to devote the bulk of his intervention to denouncing Shachtmanism only so that one of his comrades could get up and sound indistinguishable from the LRP in chauvinist-baiting the SL. Such is the price of admission into the anti-Spartacist opportunist swamp.

Explaining why we call the Shachtmanite LRP "State Department socialists," a Spartacist floor speaker also demolished the "anti-imperialist" posturing of the IG and BT:

> "We've gotten a lot of guff today about how the SL isn't for the defeat of imperialism. This is really rich, coming from the LRP. You couldn't even be for the defeat of the Nazi imperialists by the Soviet Red Army! You weren't for the defeat of American imperialism by China and North Korea, either. You were so afraid that the El Salvador rebels [in the 1980s] were tainted by Stalinist germs that you weren't for their military victory. You gave them 'military support.' What does that mean—shoot the other side in the feet, not the head?
>
> "You don't like the 'State Department'? Sorry, but the State Department, Ronald Reagan and the LRP all said the same thing about Afghanistan: Red Army out! That ain't defeat of imperialism, baby, and as far as the BT and the Internationalist Group are concerned, you're not so hot on Afghanistan, either. The BT retrospectively dumped our slogan of 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!' in order to be at one with the anti-Communist left in this country. Ditto the IG, when they initiated an action at Hunter College during the [2001] war in Afghanistan and had not one word to say about 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!' So nuts to you people and your 'defeat imperialism'."

The LRP's bag of tricks on the Russian question included such outlandish allegations as: the Soviet Red Army took the side of the CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan in the 1980s; the *Wall Street Journal* was for the crushing of counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność; the Spartacist League called for the USSR to stage a nuclear attack on China. Manifestly, no lie is too big for this little league.

Responding to one of these absurd charges, our floor speaker continued:

> "Here's a picture of a young woman in the 1980s fighting in the militia when the Soviet Union was in the country. She's got a Kalashnikov. Do you know the difference between that and a woman in a head-to-toe veil? That was the difference in the two sides in the war in Afghanistan."

As for Polish Solidarność and the *Wall Street Journal*, to paraphrase Trotsky, even slander should make some sense! Could this be the same *Wall Street Journal* which in a 29 September 1981 editorial entitled "Communists and the AFL-CIO" directly threatened us for protesting the opening of a Solidarność office in New York at the headquarters of "democratic socialist" Al Shanker's teachers union a few days earlier? The editorial noted our demonstration and warned: "Anyone seeking to delegitimize" the AFL-CIO tops' support for Solidarność "should be aware of just how serious an attack he is launching."

Regarding our supposed call for a Soviet nuclear attack on China, the LRP cited as "evidence" the following from *WV* No. 226 (2 March 1979), written at the time of China's invasion of Vietnam:

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Python (Monty) Pictures Ltd

Armless knight in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* also proclaimed victory.

Cuba...

(continued from page 1)

raised an uproar over the arrests in Cuba, they have carried out their own campaign against defenders of Cuba in the U.S. A case in point is the Miami Five, who have been sentenced to between 15 years to life for the "crime" of monitoring the terrorist activities of *gusanos*. We demand: ***Free the Miami Five now!***

The Spartacist League calls for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban deformed workers state—as well as the remaining workers states of China, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. While not condoning the executions of three of the boat hijackers last month, we support those measures that are taken in defense of the gains of the Cuban Revolution, including the imprisonment of those "dissidents" who are actively collaborating with U.S. imperialism.

We call for an end to U.S. imperialism's embargo against Cuba, a blatant act of war, and demand the immediate withdrawal of American forces from Guantánamo Bay, a major U.S. military base now also being used as a concentration camp for hundreds of prisoners abducted during the U.S. war in Afghanistan. Genuine defense of the Cuban Revolution against imperialism requires a program for workers revolution throughout the Americas—and above all, here in the U.S. ***Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend the gains of the Cuban Revalutian!***

Drummer Boys for Imperialist "Democracy"

The petty-bourgeois Castro government's expropriation of the holdings of the U.S. imperialists and their domestic bourgeois lackeys in 1960-61—in the face of an escalating imperialist offensive—led to enormous gains for the Cuban working masses, particularly women and blacks. With critical Soviet military and economic aid, the resources of Cuban society were invested in a centralized, planned economy, which guaranteed everyone a job, decent housing, food and education. The free health care system, despite the crippling effect of the U.S. blockade, is still far and away the

Havana, May 2002: Fidel Castro greets Jimmy Carter, advocate of "democratic" counterrevolution.

best among "Third World" countries. Abortion is a free health service, and the infant mortality rate is lower than in parts of the "First World." The rate of AIDS infection in the U.S. is 14 times that of Cuba. The island has more doctors and teachers per capita than just about any country in the world.

Despite its heroic achievements, the Cuban workers state has been bureaucratically deformed from its inception with the working class excluded from political power. Cuba is ruled by a Stalinist caste that upholds the nationalist dogma of building "socialism in one country" and opposes the perspective of international proletarian revolution, thus undermining the defense of the Cuban Revolution. Cuba's situation has become particularly acute since the collapse of the Soviet Union. To avert economic disaster, the Cuban government has increasingly opened the country to imperialist investment and instituted a series of "market reforms." In the mid 1990s, the regime also legalized the holding and exchange of U.S. currency, a "dollarization" which has led to sharp and growing income differentials hitting women and black Cubans the hardest. As part of our defense of the Cuban Revolution, we fight for a workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy in Havana and establish a regime of workers democracy, based on the power of workers councils, and revolutionary internationalism.

At the time of Carter's visit, we warned: "While the counterrevolutionary dissidents may be few in number today, the growing imperialist penetration and social inequality serve to continually reinforce pro-capitalist tendencies within Cuba and to undermine support for the revolution among the population" (*WV* No. 782, 31 May 2002). And, in fact, Castro's embrace of Carter only served to embolden internal counterrevolutionary forces, as the many thousands of signatures garnered by the Varela project show. In welcoming Carter, Castro hailed this "human rights" imperialist's "tenure as president" for easing relations with Cuba. In fact, Carter ushered in a renewed imperialist anti-Soviet war drive during his presidency in the late 1970s, wielding the same "human rights" rhetoric he used in Cuba. This included promoting a host of Soviet "dissidents" like the Varela types today.

Taking their cue from "democratic" imperialists like Carter, a wide array of "left" liberals and trade-union bureaucrats in the U.S. and internationally have joined in the denunciations of the arrests in Cuba. After the trials in April, United Federation of Teachers official and Democratic Socialists of America member Leo Casey circulated a petition denouncing Castro's crackdown as "brute repression" while not saying a word about the U.S. government's occupation of Iraq or its "war on terror" against immigrants and labor in the U.S. This was signed by a herd of anti-communist, social-democratic professors such as Stanley Aronowitz and Bogdan Denitch and *Nation* types like Katha Pollitt and Todd Gitlin.

For those "leftist" intellectuals who were squeamish about signing such an outright statement of support to the Bush regime, another petition was circulated by the social-democratic Campaign for Peace and Democracy, which was signed by such notables as Howard Zinn, Cornel West and that all-purpose anti-communist Noam Chomsky. While mouthing some criticisms of U.S. policy toward Cuba (and Iraq), the statement asserts, "We support civil liberties and democratic rights everywhere, regardless of the country's economic, political or social system.... We support democracy in Cuba. The imprisonment of people for attempting to exercise their rights of free expression is outrageous and unacceptable."

Exposing what this bleating for "democracy" in Cuba is all about, leftist intellectual James Petras wrote in *Socialist Viewpoint* (May 2003):

> "The principal author and promoter of the anti-Cuban declaration in the United States (signed by Chomsky, Zinn and Wallerstein) was Joanne Landy, a self-declared 'democratic socialist,' and lifelong advocate of the violent overthrow of the Cuban government—for the past 40 years. She is now a member of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), one of the major institutions advising the U.S. government on imperial policies for over a half century....
>
> "It is no surprise that the statement authored by this chameleon right-wing extremist contained no mention of Cuba's social accomplishments and opposition to imperialism. For the record, it should be noted, that Landy was a visceral opponent of the Chinese, Vietnamese and other social revolutions in her climb to positions of influence in the CFR."

For the record, it should also be noted that Joanne Landy is a former member of the Shachtmanite International Socialists, which spawned the International Socialist Organization and Sy Landy's League for the Revolutionary Party, which are also hostile to the Cuban Revolution. For these outfits, the abstract notion of (***bourgeois***) "democracy" and not the proletarian class character of the Cuban state is the be-all and end-all.

LRP...

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> "As for Moscow's ultimate option, there is much that it could do to bring China around if Brezhnev & Co. were really committed to the international solidarity they cynically profess. Peking has an extremely narrow nuclear establishment, all of it targeted by the USSR. Likewise the Chinese oil industry is extremely vulnerable even to a surgical attack by conventional forces in Sinkiang and Manchuria. And the Russian bureaucracy could find its hand forced so that it must take action, not out of devotion to defending the gains of the Vietnamese Revolution but rather in order to ensure its own survival."

The invasion was tacitly supported by Washington and we were serious about the Soviet Union honoring its treaty with Vietnam. In a press release announcing a demonstration outside the Chinese Mission to the UN, we said, "China is acting as the spearhead of a renewed drive by U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union and the working people of Indochina," and raised the call: "China: Get Out of Vietnam Now! Don't Be a Cat's Paw for U.S. Imperialism!" We denounced the reactionary nationalism of the Stalinist bureaucracies in both Beijing and Moscow, and called for communist unity against imperialism. The *WV* article quoted above also noted: "In calling on the USSR to honor its treaty with Vietnam we are addressing the Soviet masses, calling on them to break with Brezhnev's capitulationist policy of détente with the imperialists and to remove the bureaucracy through workers political revolution."

The LRP's hostility to the degenerated and deformed workers states is a reflection of its hostility to Leninism and to the fight for a Leninist vanguard party to lead the proletariat to power. As a Spartacist floor speaker put it:

> "The core premise of revolutionary Marxism is that the role of the revolutionary party is to bring revolutionary consciousness into the working class without which you can have splendid, inspiring, self-sacrificing struggle, but you will not have an overturn of property relations and the construction of a socialist egalitarian society without revolutionary consciousness....
>
> "Your view is that consciousness develops spontaneously from the class struggle and you have explicitly renounced Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* and denounced the Spartacist League as condescending 'middle-class saviors' for taking up Lenin's fight. Then I have a suggestion for you: If revolutionary consciousness is spontaneously generated, why don't you disband?"

When we first debated Sy Landy in 1973, his Revolutionary Socialist League —the LRP's predecessor—had just emerged from the social-democratic International Socialists, proclaiming themselves "born again" Trotskyists. We noted: "For the past fifteen years, Landy has been fighting as a Shachtmanite against Trotskyism. Now he comes here and claims he was born two months ago" (*WV* No. 27, 31 August 1973). Thirty years of Cold War and counterrevolutionary defeats later, the LRP is a hardened anti-Communist outfit that espouses in place of Marxism all manner of petty-bourgeois nationalism and trade-union opportunism. At bottom, the difference between the Spartacist League and the LRP comes down to this: We fight for new October Revolutions and they don't.■

Oakland...

(continued from page 16)

Likewise, ILWU officials have been busy attempting to divert outrage over April 7 into impotent appeals for reform of the Oakland police. This was the dominant purpose of a May 12 rally on the docks organized in advance by Direct Action to Stop War, union officials, liberal Democrats, port employers and the OPD as a stage-managed procession to "reclaim" the right to protest—as long as it was pre-arranged to have no possibility of harming capitalist profits. The cops exist to defend the property and privileges of the rulers against the working class and poor. "Police reform" is impossible so long as the whole capitalist system of racist repression exists. Police oversight schemes like civilian review boards only serve to make that system *appear* more credible.

Our PDC statement in response to April 7 pointed out: "Now the protesters at the docks are given the kind of treatment regularly meted out to the black population of the Bay Area by the cops." This truth was driven home again on Memorial Day, when the OPD opened fire with sting grenades on thousands of blacks attending a Caribbean/Brazilian festival at Oakland's Mosswood Park. These grenades, which fire several .32 caliber rubber balls, were the same as some of the projectiles police fired on April 7, so-called "non-lethal" weapons that even the Center for Army Lessons Learned says only *minimize* permanent injuries and fatalities. Capturing the impotence of looking to the capitalist state to rein in its own racist armed thugs, Bay Area Police Watch director Ismael Tarikh declared: "Despite everything we went through after the port [protest], at the first chance they revert back to what is clearly an excessive use of force" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 May).

Many supporters of Direct Action buy into the same illusion that the police can be somehow made to "serve the people"—an outlook that leaves them incapable of understanding, or fighting, the malignant state repression bearing down on them. To effectively fight, they need precisely a Marxist understanding of the forces arrayed against them, and a program for workers revolution. It was this Marxist understanding which enabled us to initiate and organize a labor-centered, united-front rally in Oakland on February 9, 2002 which mobilized dockers and other unionists in ***political independence*** from all capitalist parties and agencies, in defense of labor, immigrants, blacks and all democratic rights.

In the late 1930s, U.S. Trotskyists pointed out "Concrete democratic rights can be defended only by independent class struggle; and such a struggle finds itself in ever greater conflict with the bourgeois democratic state which itself is the agency that undermines democratic rights" (*The Peoples' Front: The New Betrayal* by James Burnham). For the bourgeoisie, workers organizing to withhold their labor *is never* acceptable. In this case, their functionaries slipped up and said it out loud. What's needed is a fight to build the revolutionary party to lead the proletariat to fulfill its historic task of ridding humanity of the scourge of capitalist exploitation and tyranny for good.■

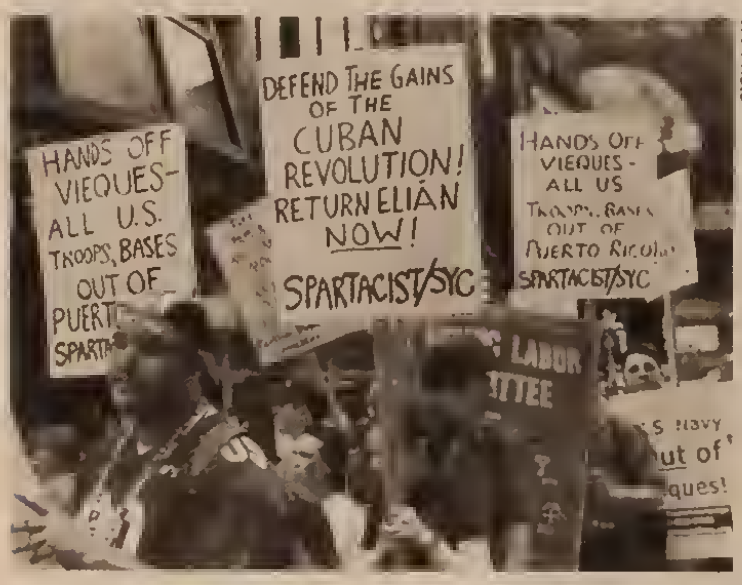
The anti-Cuban furor extends into Mexico, where in the past the nationalist bourgeoisie postured as friends of Cuba (even while secretly spying on Cuba for the U.S.). Today, many Mexican ex-leftists, such as the novelist Carlos Fuentes, are following the lead of the right-wing clericalist government of Vicente Fox in attacking Cuba. The Fox government was also joined by the supposed "left" wing of the nationalist bourgeoisie, the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). One of the main leaders of the PRD, former Senator Pablo Gómez—who for many years was a leader in the Stalinist Communist Party—led a vociferous campaign in the press against those intellectuals who dared to express any solidarity with the Cuban Revolution at this critical moment. And in France Alain Krivine, leader of the fake-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, issued a statement decrying the lack of "freedom of opinion" in Cuba and declaring: "We totally condemn the parody of justice which just took place" (*Rouge*, 1 May). Outrageously, Krivine demands that the trials in Cuba be "open to foreign observers."

Raul Corrales

Cuban soldiers defeat CIA Bay of Pigs invasion, 1961.

Cuba and the Death Penalty

Among the most abject apologists for the Castro bureaucracy on the American left are Workers World Party (WWP) and Socialist Action. Both *Workers World* (22 May) and *Socialist Action* (May 2003) carried Castro's May Day speech justifying the recent crackdown. At the same time, both look to those elements in the American establishment who seek to ease or end the embargo in order to facilitate imperialist economic penetration of Cuba. There is no contradiction here, as the Cuban bureaucracy likewise seeks to curry favor with a mythical "progressive" wing of the American bourgeoisie rather than promote the fight for socialist revolution in the U.S. While both WWP and Socialist Action correctly highlight the threat posed to Cuba by the overtly belligerent Bush administration, neither mentions the danger posed by capitalist economic penetration or "democratic" counterrevolution. This is not "defense" of Cuba; it only serves to blind genuine defenders of the Cuban Revolution from the dangers at hand and what is needed to defend Cuba.



WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at May 2000 NYC protest against U.S. base on Puerto Rican island of Vieques.

Last year, *Workers World* (23 May 2002) refused even to criticize Castro for welcoming former imperialist chieftain Carter, instead calling on the "progressive movement" to "reject Carter's preaching to Cuba on democracy, while taking advantage of the attention focused on the blockade to campaign more vigorously than ever against it." Even today, a year after Castro's embrace of Carter, neither Workers World nor Socialist Action say a word about how Castro's policies encouraged the forces of counterrevolution in Cuba.

In addition, neither WWP nor Socialist Action condemns the recent executions carried out by the Cuban government. In fact, *Socialist Action* (May 2003) asserts that the executions "sent a clear signal" to the U.S. that Cuba "will not be bullied." Denouncing "the so-called democratic left that equally condemns the death penalty in the U.S. and Cuba, and treats the matter as a universal moral principle," *Socialist Action* points to the executions carried out by the Bolshevik government of Lenin and Trotsky during the Civil War and imperialist intervention that followed the 1917 Russian Revolution.

Marxists—including the Bolsheviks—are opposed to the barbaric institution of capital punishment. The Bolsheviks carried out revolutionary terror in defense of the new workers state, understanding that the war against counterrevolution was a temporary episode which would need temporary and drastic measures. But the penal code was a more permanent feature of the proletarian state. When the death penalty, instead of being an act of war, was made part of the country's criminal code in 1922, this step was intended to be temporary. But the following year, the reference to the "temporary character" of the death penalty was struck from the code. And like so many other measures employed temporarily by the young workers state, with the Stalinist political counterrevolution, these measures were made permanent and twisted into the most grotesque opposite of what the Bolsheviks intended (see "Abolish the Death Penalty!" *WV* No. 117, 9 July 1976).

To be sure, it is positively obscene for the U.S. government, which has carried out well over *600* executions over the last decade as opposed to barely a dozen in Cuba, to protest the recent executions of the hijackers. Nonetheless, the executions in Cuba were not a case of summary justice by a workers government in a civil war situation but an application of the juridical code of the country. As Trotskyists, we know full well that the Castro regime metes out repression to those of its opponents, including socialist militants, who are not counterrevolutionaries. It was in the name of "defending the revolution" that Castro ordered the execution of General Arnaldo Ochoa Sánchez in 1989 after a Stalinist show trial recalling the Moscow purges of the late 1930s. Ochoa was a highly decorated war hero and had been the head of the Cuban military mission in Angola at the time that Cuban troops fought against the U.S.-backed invasion by the racist South African army starting in the mid 1970s.

For Workers Political Revolution!

Workers democracy is completely alien to Stalinism, as it is to the crew of radlibs and others who peddle the cause of the pro-imperialist "dissidents" in the name of bourgeois democracy. But it is critical for us Marxists, who fight to defend and extend the gains of the Cuban Revolution by replacing the nationalist rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy that seeks to appease the imperialists with the rule of workers soviets based on a program of proletarian revolutionary internationalism.

This perspective has been a hallmark of our tendency from the time of our origins as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the early 1960s. Against the SWP majority, which equated the Castro bureaucracy with the revolutionary internationalist Bolshevik government of Lenin and Trotsky, the RT characterized Cuba as a bureaucratically deformed workers state and showed that the Castroite guerrillas in power had embraced the nationalist-Stalinist model of the USSR after its degeneration, which meant upholding the dogma of "socialism in one country" and opposing the perspective of international proletarian revolution. As we explained in the 1973 preface to "Cuba and Marxist Theory" (*Marxist Bulletin* No. 8):

> "In opposing the SWP Majority's revisionism, our original tendency came into existence and fought for three main programmatic points in orienting to the Cuban revolution and its defense: insistence on the Permanent Revolution, i.e. the view that no essential task of the revolution could be achieved short of the victory and consolidation of a workers state; and, correspondingly, insistence on the struggle for hegemony of the working class in the revolution; together with the necessity for a conscious Trotskyist party as the proletarian vanguard to lead that struggle."

When in 1963 the Castro regime began rounding up and imprisoning the Cuban Trotskyists of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario—after seizing their printing presses in 1961 and smashing the type of a Spanish edition of Trotsky's *Permanent Revolution*—we stood out on the American left in calling for "Freedom for Cuban Trotskyists!" (see *Spartacist* No. 3, January-February 1965).

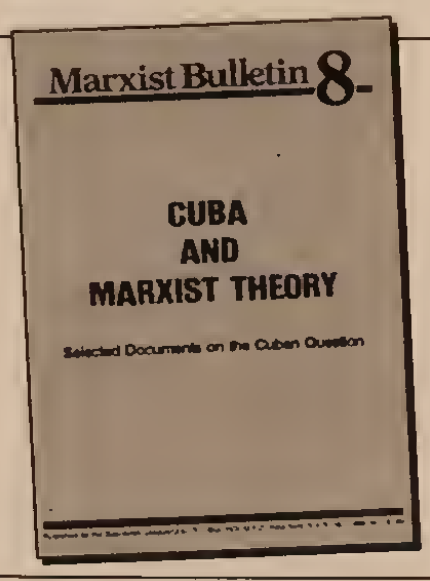
In explaining how a petty-bourgeois guerrilla movement led to the creation of a deformed workers state, we wrote in the Spartacist League's Declaration of Principles adopted in 1966:

> "Movements of this sort can under certain conditions, i.e., the extreme disorganization of the capitalist class in the colonial country and the absence of the working class contending in its own right for social power, smash capitalist property relations; however, they cannot bring the working class to *political* power. Rather, they create bureaucratic anti-working-class regimes which suppress any further development of these revolutions towards socialism."

Today, with the Soviet Union destroyed and consequently no readily available lifeline against imperialist encirclement, the narrow historical opening for petty-bourgeois forces to overturn local capitalist rule has been closed.

As the collapse of the USSR showed, an isolated workers state cannot last indefinitely under the relentless pressures of continued capitalist encirclement. Whether through military threats or the influx of cheap commodities undermining the planned economy, the pressures of world imperialism will work ultimately to overthrow the gains of a revolution confined to a single country.

Revolutionaries in the U.S. have a special duty to defend Cuba against capitalist restoration and American imperialism. It is in the U.S., the bastion of world imperialism, where the decisive struggle will be fought for the emancipation of the working masses throughout the Americas. It is necessary to forge a revolutionary workers party which brings to the proletariat the understanding that the defense of the Cuban Revolution is an integral part of its struggle against the American capitalist exploiters. Such a party can only be built by breaking workers and minorities from illusions in the capitalist Democratic Party, the other party of racism and war. The Spartacist League is dedicated to the fight to build the Leninist vanguard party needed to lead that struggle to victory.■



Marxist Bulletin No. 8
Cuba and Marxist Theory

Selected Documents on the Cuban Question, 1960-1966

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Kurds...

(continued from page 5)

deported. The repression was so intense that it would be 30 years before any significant political struggle reasserted itself in Turkish Kurdistan. Since rebellion was renewed in the 1980s, more than three million Kurds have been driven from their homes. This is a nation that has dearly earned the right to form an independent state. Only self-satisfied great-power chauvinists like the IBT could make the obscene statement that the Kurdish people are "indifferent" to the question of national liberation.

The Iraqi Revolution of 1958

Now, I indicated earlier that there was rich historical experience of joint class struggle between Arab and Kurdish workers. I want to talk a bit about the high point of that tradition, the Iraqi revolution of 1958. That revolution was triggered on Bastille Day—July 14—1958 when the overthrow of the hated British-installed monarchy by Iraqi Free Officers touched off the most powerful demonstration of revolutionary capacity in the Near East. Armed and highly organized, the Iraqi working class, led by the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), stood on the brink of seizing power. And a vanguard role in the revolution was played by Kurdish workers in the oil fields and industries of Kirkuk and Mosul. According to Uriel Dann: "The thousands of workers at the oil installations, the majority of whom were Kurds, had nurtured a local communist branch with a fighting record unrivalled in Iraq" (*Iraq Under Qassem*).

Within weeks, a peasant insurrection was sweeping across the agricultural plains of Iraq as peasants burned landlords' estates, destroyed the account ledgers and seized the land. The ICP controlled the labor unions, peasant organizations, the union of students. Mammoth rallies, some drawing over a million participants, were staged in Baghdad under ICP leadership. President Eisenhower responded to the revolutionary explosion by sending Marines to Lebanon and preparing for a possible invasion of Iraq. The *Wall Street Journal* (16 July 1958) candidly declared: "We are fighting for the oil fields of the Middle East."

The 1958 revolution had an enormous impact throughout the Near East, not only on workers but on the Kurdish people. One measure of the revolutionary turmoil in Iraq is that the new constitution cited the Kurds as equal partners with Arabs in society (without of course recognizing the Kurds' right to independence). David McDowall, in his *A Modern History of the Kurds*, declared that the Iraqi revolution of 1958 provided "easily the most critical impetus to Kurdish feeling" in Turkey.

The Iraqi Communist Party was not only the most proletarian of the Communist parties in the Near East: from its inception it had a large number of members from national and ethnic minorities, including Jews. In the period from 1949 to 1955, every general secretary of the ICP was Kurdish, as was nearly one-third of its central committee. From its inception, the ICP had called for the Kurdish right to independence. However, in 1955, as the Stalinists were capitulating to Nasser and Arab nationalism, the ICP criticized its previous position and now declared that "the fraternal Kurdish people has no interests which are incompatible with the interest of any of the Arab countries" (quoted in Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq*).

From the outset of the 1958 upsurge, the ICP threw its support behind the government headed by Brigadier Abd al-Karim Qassim, whom the Stalinists hailed as "sole leader." This was the fruit of the Stalinists' dogma of "two-stage revolution." That meant putting off the aim of socialist revolution to the distant future while today casting about for "progressive" capitalist and imperialist "allies" to help them achieve a bourgeois-democratic revolution. This idea of unity with the so-called "progressive" bourgeoisie has repeatedly served to disorient and demobilize the working class and set it up for bloody defeat, from China in 1927 to Spain in the 1930s to Allende's Chile in the early 1970s.

The high point of the revolution came in early 1959 when the ICP mobilized a quarter of a million people in Mosul,

DPA

1997: Kurdish guerrillas slaughtered by Turkish troops amid ongoing war of terror against Kurdish population.

H. Cristoph

Aluminum factory in the Ruhr. Turkish and Kurdish workers are strategic component of industrial proletariat in Germany.

many of them armed, to suppress a coup by Nasserites and counterrevolutionary officers. This triggered several days of street fighting in which Communist-led workers and soldiers mopped up the conspirators and their bourgeois backers, arresting many and hanging others from lampposts. Armed militants of the People's Resistance Force (PRF), a popular militia that had been set up by Qassim in July 1958 and quickly taken over by the Communists, essentially took power in the city.

At this point, the ICP had more support among military officers than the Free Officers movement had had when it took power on 14 July 1958. According to Batatu, whose book is the standard work on the history of the ICP, pro-ICP officers controlled the strategic First Division in Basra and Nasiriya, the Second Division in Kirkuk, a brigade of the Second Division in Mosul, and a number of other army units. The commander of the air force was an ICP supporter, as were almost one-quarter of the pilots. A number of these military commanders were pleading with the ICP leadership to take power, which gives you an idea of what the climate must have been among the ranks.

Above all, the People's Resistance Force, which had just demonstrated its power in Mosul, numbered, by a conservative estimate, 25,000 in May 1959.

Here is how the *Militant* (20 April 1959) of the Socialist Workers Party, at the time the Trotskyist party in the U.S., described the situation:

> "Far from obliging the Kassim regime by disappearing back into their wretched hovels, the common people of Baghdad—the 'mob,' as the American newspaper correspondents call them—remain in control of the capital.
>
> "Their organized units of young men and young women—for the revolution is liberating the Arab women from their centuries of bondage—patrol the streets and maintain public order. Moreover, the Kassim government is reluctantly giving in to mass demands that the People's Resistance Forces should retain their weapons. Heretofore, weapons had to be turned back to army depots after each day's drills....
>
> "In Iraq, the workers and peasants now have an extremely favorable opportunity to carry through a socialist revolution which would put them on the road to ending the backwardness and poverty of their country and would make Iraq the inspiration and attractive power for the masses of all Mideast countries."

The Iraqi Communist Party

Amid the revolutionary turbulence, the possibilities were enormous for even a relatively small Trotskyist organization to intervene and split the ICP, winning revolutionary-minded workers and intellectuals away from their Stalinist misleaders. The ICP made such spectacular gains that in January 1959, it was forced to declare a recruitment freeze because the flood of new members was overwhelming its ability to integrate them. The SWP remarked perceptively (*Militant*, 20 April 1959) that because the ICP had mushroomed so quickly since July '58 "it may not be under the firm control of a bureaucratic machine."

I have some indirect evidence of the kind of tensions that were tearing at the ICP—and probably at CPs throughout the Near East at the time. It is from an article written in early 1959—when the Iraqi revolution was at its height—by Maxime Rodinson, a French Marxist intellectual specializing in the Near East. At the time, Rodinson was a member of the French CP or was just in the process of breaking from it and was in contact with many CP members in the Near East. He wrote:

> "We find ourselves faced with the same sort of dilemma that was the subject of very bitter controversy among the Russian social-democrats before 1917. As Trotsky realized at the time, and Lenin also as can be seen from the April Theses, the question is: Should the socialist revolution follow immediately after the anti-feudal revolution (and anti-imperialist, here)? Or should allowance be made for a long period of construction of the economic independence in between the two stages, in the context of relations of capitalist production?
>
> "The social forces needed for the socialist revolution do exist."
>
> —Maxime Rodinson, *Marxism and the Muslim World* (1981)

Rodinson continues here to accept the Stalinist dogma of revolution by stages, but he is certainly chafing within the limits set by it. I can't prove it, but I'm quite sure that this quote reflects, in an indirect way, the gigantic contradictions within the Stalinist parties of the Near East at the time.

In July, attention was centered on Kirkuk, where an ICP-led demonstration degenerated into a communalist massacre of Turkmens, who were prominent in the city's commercial elite. There was no evidence then or now that the ICP leadership had fomented or supported the communal slaughter. But Qassim used the Kirkuk events as a pretext to repress the ICP. He ordered the CP-led militia, the Popular Resistance Force, disbanded, arrested hundreds of Communist supporters and sealed the offices of the General Federation of Trade Unions. A plenum of the ICP Central Committee responded with an obsequious self-criticism declaring that its demand for participation in the government had been "a mistake" because it "led to the impairment of the party's relations with the national government"—in other words, it displeased Qassim. The plenum declared a "freeze" on Communist work in the army, and informed the ranks that it was carrying out an "orderly retreat."

Coincidentally, the very same day the plenum report was published, it was announced that Khrushchev was going to visit the U.S. the following month for a summit meeting with Eisenhower. Batatu underlines how Khrushchev sold out the

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Iraqi proletariat to make his Camp David meeting with the U.S. president more congenial:

> "Perhaps the factor that had the greatest weight in the decision to beat a retreat was the pressure that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union appears to have brought to bear upon the Iraqi Communist leadership. According to Adnan Jilmiran, the then member of the Mosul Local Committee, the Russians sent at this point to Baghdad George Tallu, a member of the Iraqi Politbureau, who had been undergoing medical treatment in Moscow, with an urgent request to the Iraqi party to avoid provoking Qasim, and withdraw its bid to participate in the government. The Russians apparently had no wish to cut all their bridges with Nasir, or jeopardize their new policy of 'peaceful coexistence,' or wreck the chances of a visit to Washington which Khrushchev contemplated and which he would eventually make in September."

In February 1963, the Ba'ath Party was able to broker a military coup that brought down Qassim and unleashed the counterrevolutionary furies. Using lists of Communists supplied by the CIA, the Ba'ath Party militia, the National Guard, launched a house-to-house search, rounding up and shooting suspected CPers. An estimated 5,000 were killed and thousands more jailed, many of them hideously tortured by Saddam Hussein and others.

The CIA's role in the 1963 Ba'ath coup has been widely documented. King Hussein of Jordan told the Egyptian daily *Al-Ahram* shortly after the coup that he knew "for a certainty" that U.S. intelligence services provided names and addresses of Communists to be killed. Edith and E.F. Penrose, in their *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (1978) report that a number of Iraqi officials, including Ba'athists, told them of the CIA's role. And Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett state in *Iraq Since 1958* (1987):

> "A high-ranking former official of the State Department has confirmed to us that Saddam Husain and other Ba'thists had made contact with the American authorities in the late 1950s and early 1960s; at this stage, the Ba'th were thought to be the 'political force of the future,' and deserving of American support against 'Qasim and the Communists'."

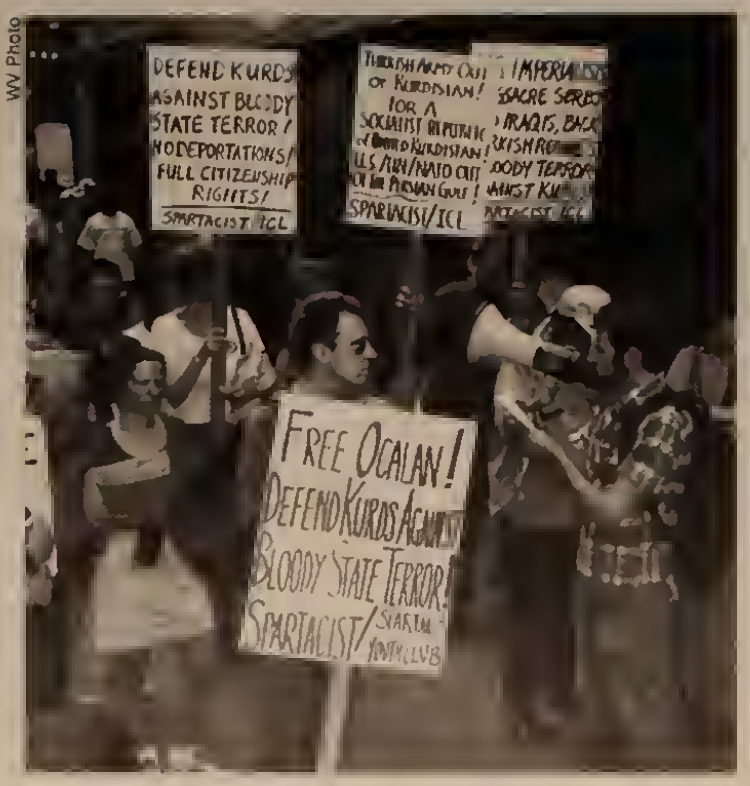
Meanwhile, the ICP's record of betrayal went on: when Kurds rebelled against the Qassim regime in 1961, the ICP had denounced the revolt as "serving imperialist designs." In 1972, when Saddam Hussein allied for a while with the Soviet Union, two ICP leaders who had not had their eyes gouged out in his prisons joined his government. Last month, what's left of the ICP greeted the U.S. colonial invasion with a banner in Baghdad that read: "A Free Country for Joyful People."

For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

Even in defeat, the Iraqi revolution of 1958-59 shows the potential for the working class to take power and lay the basis for the liberation of all the oppressed. The positive example of this is, of course, the Russian Revolution of 1917. The world's first workers state served as a beacon of liberation to the oppressed masses in the former tsarist empire and the world over. Because the Bolsheviks were determined to solve the many national questions by fighting resolutely for national and democratic rights, the Soviet proletariat was able to win to its side the myriad oppressed nationalities and peoples in the former Russian empire. This was a powerful factor in the workers' victory over the White counterrevolution in the Civil War. Lenin insisted that the Soviet Union be a free union of peoples. In the early years of Bolshevik power, many Soviet republics, autonomous *oblasts*, and other regional entities were established—the living realization of the Bolshevik program of national self-determination.

Inside the Soviet Union, the small population of some 200,000 Kurds was granted full equality with other nationalities. In 1923, the young Soviet state created an Autonomous Republic of Kurdistan roughly situated between Armenia and Azerbaijan—the so-called "Red Kurdistan"—which, according to Gerard Chaliand's *People Without a Country* (1980), was "a beacon to the entire Kurdish people." While some 70 to 80 percent of Kurds in Turkey or Iran remain illiterate, among Soviet Kurds illiteracy had been completely eliminated by the 1930s. The Soviet Union's generous treatment of its own small Kurdish minority and its support of the short-lived Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in Iran after WWII gave it enormous prestige in Kurdistan. For years, even Kurdish nationalist groups like the KDP based on traditional clans claimed to be "Marxist-Leninist." When I gave this talk in New York, comrade Bill spoke of an Iranian woman leftist he knew whose mother was pro-Soviet because the only reason she learned to read and write was the occupation of Iranian Kurdistan during World War II by the Soviet Army.

The experience of the Russian Revolution is vitally relevant to the Kurdish question for yet another reason, the liberation of women it achieved in the Muslim lands of Central Asia. As the Red Army swept through Central Asia in the early years after the 1917 Russian Revolution, the Bolsheviks undertook the enormous task of trying to liberate women in that historically Muslim region. When they spoke of "martyrs fallen on the women's liberation front," they were talking about the dedicated and heroic activists from the Department for Work Among Women (Zhenotdel), who put on the veil to bring to the women of the Muslim East news of the new Soviet laws and programs that would change their lives. Many of these women lost their lives at the hands of enraged husbands, fathers and brothers. I was in Soviet Central Asia in the 1980s. In Samarkand, part of a former *madrassa* (religious school) had been converted into a museum honoring these women. The Bolsheviks had abolished the death penalty after the revolution, but they made an exception and reinstated it specifically for murders of this type. They put a stop to it.



WV Photo

NYC, July 1999: Spartacists participate in united-front demonstration demanding freedom for imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan.

Novosti

Reading class for women in the Soviet Caucasus in the 1920s. Bolsheviks waged fierce struggle to emancipate women of Muslim East.

A political counterrevolution leading to the consolidation of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy stood between what I saw in Uzbekistan and the liberating ideals that animated Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks and the courageous Zhenotdel women. Yet the progress that had been achieved was astounding. In all the time I was there, I never saw a woman wearing a veil—even by women who had been born in the days before the revolution was consolidated in that region. Contraception and abortion were freely available. Unlike any Muslim country in the world, I was able to speak freely and naturally with women strangers in public places, in airports, in factories. A reflection of the excellent educational level was that most people I met there—women as well as men—spoke English or another West European language in addition to Russian and Uzbek.

Today, after the restoration of capitalism and the destruction of the Soviet Union, I hate to think of the fate of those women—or the men I met there too for that matter. The societies of Central Asia have been thrown back light years. Islamic fundamentalism is on the rise, the mosques are full. Disease is rampant, the modern health care system I observed has been destroyed.

The question of women's liberation cuts right across the claims of Kurdish nationalists to stand for freedom and emancipation. They all capitulate to the patriarchal traditions of the tribes and clans—in fact, in cases like the KDP and the PUK they themselves are nothing but a guise for domination by a particular clan. The PKK criticizes women's oppression in its public statements and is known for placing women under arms in its guerrilla groups, but its nationalist outlook leads it to find common cause with some of the most reactionary forces in the Turkish political landscape; it even included representatives of the Sunni clergy—sworn enemies of women's liberation—in its exile parliament.

Many Kurdish nationalists pride themselves on the supposed fact that Kurdish women are more liberated than other women of the Near East because they wear only a light headscarf instead of the *abayya*, the heavy, black head-to-toe gown worn by traditional Arab women in Iraq. Well, I can tell you that Kurdish women do not live a life of "liberation." You might remember the widespread press coverage last year of a case in Sweden where a Kurdish immigrant shot and killed his daughter because she had refused an arranged marriage and had spoken publicly about women's oppression. Such so-called "honor killings" are not uncommon in Kurdistan—or in many other parts of the world. This was dramatically portrayed in Yilmaz Güney's 1983 film *Yol*, which centers on a husband's murder of his wife as punishment for adultery (we published an interesting review of this film in *Women and Revolution* No. 27, Winter 1983-84). In the late '90s, when the KDP and PUK set up de facto states in Iraqi Kurdistan under U.S. protection, they did nothing to stop this practice; the KDP refused to even pass a formal law making "honor killings" a crime.

Another thing shown in Güney's film—this is quite common in Kurdistan—is a young couple who are forced to flee in order to get married because the parents disapprove; in the film, the bride's family hunts them down and kills them. According to one academic study of Kurds in Turkey (where family law is formally much more advanced than elsewhere in the Near East), only one marriage in four was arranged by the couple themselves, and even in these cases agreement by the families was often a precondition. Over 60 percent of the Kurdish women interviewed indicated that their husbands had to pay a bride price for them, essentially buying them from their families as chattel.

Women's oppression is rooted in class society, centrally through the institution of the family. Even in the most advanced bourgeois societies only the overthrow of capitalist class rule can lay the material basis for the full emancipation of women in an egalitarian, international socialist society. But in those countries where bourgeois revolutions never occurred—which happens to be the case in the Muslim countries of the Near East—the question of women's liberation is literally one of life and death—a fight for such basic needs as literacy, education, an end to forced marriages, freedom from the veil and the enforced seclusion and subjugation it represents.

The Russian Revolution showed in practice the road to liberation not only for women but for all the oppressed. The difference between the experience in Russia in 1917 and Iraq in 1958-59 is that in Russia there existed a party—Lenin's Bolsheviks—capable of leading the working class to power. That's the central point of my presentation today. What's necessary—not just for the liberation of the Kurds but of all the oppressed—is to forge revolutionary working-class parties on the model of the Bolshevik Party, in the Near East and throughout the world. That's the task that the International Communist League is dedicated to accomplishing.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

From the Horse's Mouth

"War on Terror" = War on Workers

California Agency Targets Protesters, Unions

OAKLAND—Recent articles in the *Oakland Tribune* have exposed the sinister role of the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC). Labeling antiwar protest and union action "terrorist," CATIC had a direct hand in the April 7 attack on the Oakland docks in which Oakland police under liberal mayor Jerry Brown opened fire with so-called "less lethal" weapons, injuring dozens of antiwar protesters and nine longshoremen.

According to the *Oakland Tribune* (18 May), on April 2 CATIC sent out a "warning" that the antiwar protesters might "act violently." An Oakland Police Department (OPD) "intelligence unit" supervisor, Derwin Longmire, had already e-mailed police commanders falsely portraying the upcoming port rally as a "Black Bloc" event with masked "anarchists" supposedly bent on destroying property and attacking police. In the weeks leading up to April 7, Bay Area cops rounded up over 2,000 antiwar protesters. CATIC spokesman Mike Van Winkle declared to the *Tribune* that "if you have a protest group protesting a war where the cause that's being fought against is international terrorism, you might have terrorism at that (protest). You can almost argue that a protest against that is a terrorist act."

Van Winkle also told the *Tribune* that "I've heard terrorism described as anything that is violent or has an economic impact, and shutting down a port certainly would have some economic impact." These words echo the federal Maritime Transportation Security Act (MSA) signed into law last November with bipartisan support, which defines a "transportation security incident" to include "economic disruption"—a direct threat to labor action at the ports. In addition, Longmire monitored and circulated "e-mails and Web postings by leaders of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and acquaintances in the anti-war movement" for use in preparing the attack.

While the rulers wage bloody war from Afghanistan to Iraq, they want to stop dissent at home by outlawing it. Over 20 years ago, then-California attorney general George Deukmejian wrongfully included the Spartacist League as "terrorists" in his 1979 "Report on Organized Crime in California." We launched a lawsuit against him, successfully compelling a retraction. As we pointed out at the time, "we were falsely labeled as dangerous people, to be dealt with militarily, mad dogs to be shot down" (*WV* No. 296, 8 January 1982). CATIC's disinformation is similarly calculated to provoke and justify violent police attacks such as that which took place at the port.

CATIC was set up and is run not by the Bush administration, but by the governor, Gray Davis, and state attorney general, Bill Lockyer, both Democrats, who made it a centerpiece of their re-election campaigns last year. The agency has a budget of $6.7 million a year and is staffed by people from the FBI and Defense Intelligence Agency, among others. The *Tribune* reports that the agency has gathered and analyzed information on activists since its inception shortly after September 11, and compiles dossiers on any group or activity it deems to have "criminal predicate."

Hafalia/SF Chronicle

G.K./Indymedia

Top: Police open fire on antiwar protesters and longshoremen at Port of Oakland, April 7. Oakland cops firing sting grenades at black youth attending a Caribbean/Brazilian festival at Mosswood Park, Memorial Day.

CATIC's equation of social protest and union action with terrorism is a throwback to the post-World War I "criminal syndicalist" laws such as that passed in California in 1919 under which strikes were broken and left-wing labor and political activists jailed. In fact, CATIC's definition of terrorism has a potentially far broader target. Giving proof to our warning that the "war on terrorism" is aimed straight at the heart of the working class, Van Winkle's description of terrorism as "anything that is violent or has an economic impact" would include economic strikes and work stoppages to enforce contract provisions. This head-on assault on the right to organize and protest can and must be defeated!

Bringing the War Home: A Bipartisan Effort

A statement issued by the Partisan Defense Committee the same day as the April 7 police attack pointed out, "The direct link between the war against Iraq and the war on labor in the U.S. was brought home with a vengeance in Oakland today." During last year's contract battle, Bush threatened the ILWU with military strikebreaking precisely because it is a strategic union with the ability to shut down all West Coast shipping. The massively violent police response on the Oakland docks was triggered by the specter of that power being mobilized against the bloody imperialist slaughter in Iraq. The anti-union character of the attack is graphically captured in the case of Billy Kepoo. An OPD projectile shattered the right hand of this ILWU Local 10 member and highly skilled crane operator, depriving him of the ability to work for months. Kepoo is a steady man for Stevedoring Services of America—one of the companies which helped coordinate the police attack—which outrageously denied him workers compensation benefits.

Democrat Lockyer has been furiously dodging and weaving, "dissociating" himself from Van Winkle's comments and promising a "review" of CATIC (*Oakland Tribune*, 21 May). It is an embarrassment for Democratic politicians who get millions of campaign dollars from union bureaucrats to be running an operation that defines unions as terrorist organizations. More importantly, it throws a harsh spotlight on the capitalist class character of the Democratic Party, threatening to undermine its entire game of pretending to be "friends" of labor, blacks and immigrants while enforcing capitalist rule.

Riding to the rescue is Barbara Lee, who, along with three other liberal Democratic Congressmen representing the heavily black, Latino and working-class East Bay, wrote a letter to governor Davis requesting an investigation. Lee herself sent a smarmy letter to Lockyer beginning "Dear Bill," "applauding" his efforts and declaring "I look forward to working with you to uphold the rights of nonviolent protest" (*Oakland Tribune*, 24 May). Lee aims to help preserve the Davis/Lockyer edition of the "war on terror" by removing what she treats as excesses that provoke outrage. But the "war on terror" *is* a capitalist war on working people. The Democrats as a capitalist party are fully committed to carrying it out—from Oakland mayor Jerry Brown, who declared "the police acted appropriately" in attacking the port protesters, to Senator Dianne Feinstein, who shepherds California's federal "anti-terror" funds. CATIC is the Democratic Party's contribution to the "war on terror." Indeed, the Democrats' main gripe with Bush is that the war on Iraq has diverted resources away from pursuit of "homeland security."

Labor: Fight Now to Defend Immigrants, Blacks, Unions!

CATIC's role is nothing new—the function of the entire state apparatus is to bring courts, cops, prisons to bear in the defense of capitalist private property. Moves by the rulers to take away the rights of workers and the oppressed are inevitable because the entire structure of capitalist society is based on the extraction of profit from workers' labor, engendering an ongoing class struggle.

Under capitalism the workers and oppressed have only the rights they successfully fight for. The PDC responded to the April 7 attack by campaigning to mobilize unions in defense of the antiwar protesters and the ILWU, while the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club mobilized defense for anarchists targeted by repression. But what would have made a decisive difference was powerful labor action, beginning with shutting down the ports for the day in response to the police assault. This did not happen.

The reason for this default is political. The unions' pro-capitalist bureaucratic misleadership, seeking accommodation with the employers and their state, shuns class struggle in favor of an alliance with the capitalist Democratic Party. The labor tops try to enlist the unions as "labor partners" in the very "war on terror" which has labor in its gun sights. Thus despite the ILWU's paper opposition to the Iraqi war and occupation, the union's bureaucracy guts this stance by repeatedly boasting—including in the midst of the employers' lockout last year—that "The ILWU is committed to shipping all military cargo" (ILWU press release, 2 October 2002). And at the same time, they actually collaborated in writing the anti-union MSA.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 806 X-623 4 July 2003

U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!

Down With the Colonial Occupation!

AP

U.S. Imperialists: Looters and Murderers

Baghdad, June 18: Demonstration by former Iraqi soldiers demanding back pay and pensions. Two were killed by U.S. troops.

JULY 1—A few weeks ago, the Seventh Armored Cavalry, deploying tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles and Apache helicopters, launched a major attack in the small village of Al Hir 30 miles north of Baghdad. The stated aim was to wipe out a group of anti-American resistance fighters reportedly operating there. When the assault ended, a 70-year-old farmer, three of his sons and a grandchild lay dead in a field near his house. These villagers were Shi'ite Muslims deeply hostile to the Saddam Hussein regime that had persecuted them.

An aunt of the three slain brothers cried out in anguish that before the attack her attitude had been "Long live Bush." But now she said, "I will never forgive him.... He has leveled our family."

"Operation Iraqi Freedom" has been replaced by "Operation Desert Scorpion," as thousands of U.S. troops storm through villages to root out alleged "terrorist" remnants of the old regime, which is how virtually the whole of the disgruntled population is being viewed by the occupation forces. "Victims of the Peace Decide Americans Are Worse than Saddam," headlined the London *Times* (23 May). Baghdad "has become a virtual parking lot for American armor," reports a columnist in the *New York Times* (1 June). After 4,000 troops of the Third and Fourth Infantry Divisions rampaged through the town of Dhuluiya, its inhabitants reported that U.S. soldiers handcuffed women and children, beat one man to death and allowed another to die of a heart attack. In Samarra, U.S. soldiers killed four members of a wedding party when they mistook a caravan of horn-tooting, gun-firing revelers for attackers.

Scenes from U.S.-occupied Iraq increasingly resemble those of the murderous Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. U.S. occupation chief Paul Bremer has peremptorily canceled local elections and outlawed any "gatherings, pronouncements or publications" that call for opposition to the occupation. "Saddam's tyrannical regime is being rapidly replaced by a tyranny of the occupation forces, who are killing Iraqi civilians and unleashing Vietnam-style 'search and destroy' raids on Iraqi people's homes," observed Sami Ramadani in the London *Guardian* (26 June). He continued:

> "Massive and increasingly angry marches have been taking place throughout Iraq—including the British-occupied south—often triggered by local issues, such as the imposition of mayors. Figureheads appointed by the US and British in Basra, Karbala and Najaf have been assassinated. Fury has been mounting at the hundreds of Iraqis killed by the occupation forces since the fall of Baghdad—on top of the thousands killed in the war itself. The massacre of 18 civilian demonstrators in Falluja at the end of April was, for example, the trigger for the resistance there. And last week, the US 3rd Infantry Division forces began punitive demolitions, Sharon-style, of the family houses of those allegedly fighting against the occupation forces."

Initially, many Iraqis no doubt hoped that their basic conditions of life would

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"Anti-Terror" Dragnet Threatens 13,000 with Expulsions

Stop the Deportations!

These are some of the targets of the "war on terrorism" following September 11: Refugees as young as seven, held for months in U.S. detention centers before appearing in court wearing shackles, leg irons and belly chains. A Sudanese woman who applied for asylum in the U.S. to escape 14 years of slavery in Kenya, and who upon arrival in November 2001 was handcuffed, placed in leg shackles and paraded through the Newark International Airport to a cold New Jersey detention center. A group of nine Muslim men in Evansville, Indiana, who as the result of a bogus "anti-terror" tip were rounded up, shackled, put on display for a newspaper photographer and jailed for a week.

In a stark escalation of state repression aimed at criminalizing particularly immigrants from the Near East, beginning last December all males from 24 Arab and Muslim countries who were neither citizens nor permanent residents and were over the age of 16 were mandated to appear at an immigration office to undergo humiliating interviews and to be photographed and fingerprinted. There, hundreds of the men were summarily herded into detention centers and held without charges for days, sparking protests across the country by Iranian Americans and others (see "Hundreds Arrested in Racist INS Roundup in Los Angeles," *WV* No. 794, 3 January).

Now, of the approximately 82,000 who registered as ordered by the government, more than *13,000* may face expulsion in the largest wave of deportations since September 11—not for anything ostensibly related to "terrorism," but for alleged visa violations caused in many cases by the tardiness of the INS in completing its paperwork or by being unable to attend school or work due to being jailed on phony "anti-terror" charges. Already the threat of deportation has provoked a desperate exodus: hundreds of Pakistanis and others, fearing that registration would end in their deportations, fled to Canada where they were handed over to American immigration, jailed and placed in deportation proceedings. Under the rubric of the "war on terror," the Feds have set up a racist dragnet targeting ever wider layers, uprooting families and destroying lives. ***The deportations must be stopped!*** Those who made it here have the right to stay—***full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***

If Bush and Ashcroft have their way, however, citizenship would provide little protection. A case in point is 34-year-old

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SARS: Capitalism, Racism and Public Health

See Page 6

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BT Doth Whine Too Much

We reprint below excerpts of a letter to us that can be found in full on the "Bolshevik Tendency" Web site.

Toronto, Canada
12 June 2003

To the Editor:

The 6 June issue of *Workers Vanguard* (*WV*) features two polemics against the International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT), both based on gross misrepresentations of our politics. In the account of your 10 May debate with the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), you quote Jon Brule's claim that in the late 1980s: "The BT retrospectively dumped our slogan of 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!' in order to be at one with the anti-Communist left in this country." As Comrade Brule is well aware, we proposed instead "Military Victory to the Soviet Army!," a slogan the reformists found no less objectionable. We recall that in the 1960s, the then-revolutionary Spartacist League (SL) called for "military victory" to the Viet Cong. In the early 1980s the SL also called for "military victory" to the leftist insurgents in El Salvador....

The second polemic is contained in a speech on the Kurdish question by Comrade Bruce André who claimed to have been left almost "speechless" by our observation that:

> "In the present circumstances an independent Kurdish state would find itself in very great difficulty. The situation would be even worse if such a state were limited to a fragment of Kurdish territory—for example Turkish Kurdistan. Not only would such a mini-state be entirely landlocked and surrounded by its historic oppressors, but it would be a society characterized by backward, pre-capitalist social structures. Because of its underdevelopment, an independent Kurdistan would find itself at the mercy of the regional as well as imperialist powers."
> —*1917* No. 12, 1993

While not disputing our analysis, André asserts that this amounts to "pos[ing] preconditions" and "demanding that, before the Kurds can be independent they must be free of 'backward' social structures and not be at the 'mercy' of imperialist powers." We have never and would never raise such absurd preconditions. To do so would be to reject the right of oppressed nations to self-determination. There is no question that the Kurdish people have an inalienable ***right*** to self-determination; the question is how it can be achieved. After pointing out the difficulties involved in any attempt to create an independent capitalist state, our article concluded that the road to national liberation for Kurdistan lies through revolutionary struggle against the neo-colonial regimes of the region:

> "The Kurdish bourgeoisie is so weak that it does not even pretend to be leading a struggle for Kurdish freedom. This task falls to the Kurdish working class, at the head of the peasants and other oppressed layers. Those militants who are committed to winning equal national rights for Kurds must embrace a strategy of common struggle with the working class of the nations that oppress them. In Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq the struggle against the oppression of the Kurds is closely connected with the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorships. It is extremely unlikely that the dismembered Kurdish nation can be reunited on any road other than that of the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East."
> —*Ibid.*

Aral/Sipa

Kurdish refugees trapped and dying in mountain passes following 1991 U.S. imperialist war against Iraq.

...We never opposed independence for Kurdistan. We simply pointed out that Kurdish national liberation will require revolutionary struggle, a conclusion André echoes....

Bolshevik Greetings,
Tom Riley
for the International
Bolshevik Tendency

WV Replies:

Riley and his cohorts defected from our organization in the early 1980s because they could not stomach our hard Soviet-defensist line in the context of Cold War II. Their explicit repudiation of our "Hail Red Army" slogan in 1988 came as no surprise. As we replied the first time they kvetched about our supposed misrepresentation of their line: "What does it mean to call for 'military victory' now, precisely when [Soviet president] Gorbachev & Co. are pulling the Soviet troops out? It's an empty statement to try to cover the fact that you're openly renouncing the Spartacist slogan, 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!'" ("BT Protests Too Much," *WV* No. 453, 20 May 1988). We explained, "They're paying the admission price to crawl into the all-Canada popular front: no 'soft-on-Russia' pinkos allowed."

As for the Kurdish question, the difference between us is not over how—but ***whether***—the Kurds should achieve national self-determination. Nowhere in its 1993 article, including the passage cited by Riley, does the IBT raise the call for an *independent Kurdish state*, even under proletarian rule. In fact, as we asserted, the IBT *is against* the call for an independent Kurdistan, as they make very clear in a 1999 article on the arrest of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Öcalan headlined "Permanent Revolution and Kurdistan: Free Öcalan! Defend the PKK!" There they say:

> "We unconditionally defend the right of the Kurdish nation to self-determination, that is, to establish a separate state, but we do not currently advocate that the Kurds attempt to exercise this right."

This statement is immediately followed by the quote from their 1993 article quoted by Riley above and cited by our comrade. So by their own terms this isn't just a factual "observation" but an argument *against* the establishment of a separate Kurdish state.

To defend the Kurdish right to self-determination while opposing an "attempt to exercise this right" simply means acceptance of the existing state boundaries. In the context of a polemic against the PKK, the IBT writes in its 1993 article:

> "As Leninists, we of course support the right of national self-determination. We are not opposed in principle [!] to raising this as a demand. But pushing for an independent capitalist Kurdistan against the wishes of the feeble Kurdish bourgeoisie, and with the bulk of the Kurdish people indifferent, makes no sense at all. Moreover, such a perspective could turn Kurdish revolutionaries away from the necessity to participate in, and, if possible, initiate struggles of the workers and peasants against the existing oppressor states."

In "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1914), Lenin explained that recognition "of the *right* of nations to secede in no way precludes *agitation* against secession by Marxists of a particular *oppressed* nation, just as the recognition of the right to divorce does not preclude agitation against divorce in a particular case" (emphasis in original). For Leninists, assessing whether or not to advocate independence for a subjugated nation does indeed require concrete analysis. But there could hardly be a clearer case than that of the Kurds, who have struggled for national liberation against overwhelming odds for nearly a century. Calls for "joint struggle" without unambiguous support for the national aspirations of the oppressed are worse than empty. They can only be a cover for the chauvinist status quo, as is the case as well with the IBT's opposition to our call for independence for Quebec. There will be no joint revolutionary struggle in the Near East if the Arab, Persian and Turkish working masses are not won to the cause of Kurdish independence.

Our starting point and programmatic conclusion are very different from theirs. As comrade André stated: "To win independence for the entire Kurdish nation would require the revolutionary destruction of at least four capitalist regimes—and accompanying imperialist domination—right across this strategically important region. That's what we mean by the slogan of a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan." That is the revolutionary perspective we fight for, and what Riley & Co. "do not currently advocate."■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Honor the Heroic Rosenbergs!

June 19 marked the 50th anniversary of the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in an anti-Communist, anti-Semitic witch-hunt at the height of the McCarthy era. Framed up in a mockery of a trial on charges of conspiring to pass nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union, the Rosenbergs were sent to their deaths for courageously refusing to bargain with their executioners and "name names." The Rosenbergs upheld their innocence to the very end. From the standpoint of the working class, in any case, those who aided in the defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state did a great service for humanity. We print below excerpts from a 1952 editorial in the Militant, *newspaper of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party.*

The refusal of the Supreme Court to review the conviction of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, sentenced to death for atomic espionage, marks a new stage in the witch-hunt, and it is calculated to add new fury to the anti-communist war hysteria....

The Rosenberg decision above all else was an act of ruling-class terror by a state that is preparing a war of world conquest, a war directed primarily against the Soviet Union....

There is no other way to explain why the Rosenbergs, who were charged with playing the least important role of all those involved in the atomic espionage, should alone have been given the ultimate sentence.

The Rosenbergs continue to insist upon their innocence, and they are entirely justified in demanding a new trial in view of the circumstances under which their conviction occurred. But whatever the facts, they were not convicted of the alleged crimes with which they were charged; and the death sentence was handed down not as a punishment for the alleged crimes but as a terror demonstration in the "cold war," and as a go-ahead signal to the witch-hunters at home.

—"The Rosenberg Case," *Militant* (27 October 1952)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate issues in June, July and August.**

Our next issue will be dated August 1.

Black Population Erupts over Cop Terror

Police-State Siege of Benton Harbor

CHICAGO—The overwhelmingly black town of Benton Harbor, Michigan, exploded on Monday, June 16 after the death of a 27-year-old black man, Terrance Shurn, whose motorcycle crashed during a police chase in the early morning hours. Witnesses reported that the white cop pursuing Shurn bumped his Honda 900 bike, sending it slamming into an abandoned house. Dozens came out to protest at a City Commission meeting the evening after Shurn's death. But the last straw came later that night when a number of neighborhood residents went to the crash site with candles to grieve, only to be met by police in squad cars demanding that the mourners stop their prayers and go home!

With that, the long-simmering anger of Benton Harbor's black youth erupted. Several hundred took to the streets to battle police, who fired with live ammunition at youth hurling rocks and bricks. "We're sick of them killing us," said one black woman. By the next night, several buildings were burned. By Wednesday, the Michigan State Police had declared Benton Harbor a "war zone" and flooded the town with hundreds of cops in riot gear and armored vehicles, imposing virtual martial law. (St. Joseph-Benton Harbor *Herald-Palladium*, 18 June.)

"This isn't because of what happened Monday," said Shurn's cousin Ashley Black. "This is because of everything that has been happening in Benton Harbor for years" (Chicago *Sun-Times*, 19 June). Just two months earlier, one black youth, Arthur Partee, was strangled to death by police. A few years before, seven-year-old Trent Patterson was struck and killed during a police chase. In 1991, the body of black Benton Harhor teenager Eric McGinnis was found in a river with what looked to be rope marks on his neck.

With a population of 11,000 that is 92 percent black, Benton Harbor is a testament to the hardcore segregation of the Midwest Rust Belt. The auto plants and foundries that drew black workers to the town in the 1930s and 1940s have long closed and white residents have fled. What's left behind are boarded-up storefronts, pothole-pitted streets, vacant lots and staggering unemployment. A third of Benton Harbor's families earn below $10,000 per year. "What did they leave in Benton Harbor?" asked Shurn's uncle, Ralph Crenshaw. "They left poor people and no jobs" (*Chicago Tribune*, 19 June).

Reuters

Armored vehicle patrols Benton Harbor, part of police occupation after black population exploded in anger over racist cop killings.

But just across the river lies St. Joseph, a posh Lake Michigan resort town with a population that is 90 percent white, full of trendy restaurants and boutiques catering to Chicago's rich and powerful. The rigid segregation between these "Twin Cities" was the subject of Alex Kotlowitz's *The Other Side of the River: A Story of Two Towns, a Death, and America's Dilemma* [1998]. In the mid 1990s, the Ku Klux Klan saw St. Joseph as fertile ground for a recruitment rally for racist murder. The raw racial divide is enforced by the iron fist of cop terror, especially from the predominately white cops from towns surrounding Benton Harbor. "As a black man in Benton Harbor, I don't like going to St. Joseph at night," one resident told reporters. "I would hate to be pulled over in the dark without witnesses" (*Herald-Palladium*, 29 June).

The convulsions in Benton Harbor puncture the myth of "national unity," which the American capitalist ruling class has fostered in pushing its "war against terror" at home and abroad. Domestically, the bosses' patriotic jingoism has accompanied an increase in brutal state repression, initially targeting Arab and Muslim immigrants but increasingly aimed at the black population and the entire working class. In New York City, which has had a spate of killings by cops in recent months, an editorial in the black newspaper *Amsterdam News* (19-25 June) noted: "Ever since the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, there has been a quiet anger and tension in the Black community.... This [Benton Harbor] is the kind of incident that can set a city on fire—or a state or a nation."

Predictably, liberal black leaders responded to the outrage in Benton Harbor by preaching "peace" and "order," fostering the illusion that the oppressed ghetto masses have interests in common with the racist rulers. With the town exploding in anger, black preachers formed a yellow-shirted "God Squad" to police the streets side by side with state cops. Then Jesse Jackson Sr. swooped in vowing to "stop the violence and turn people to the process of reconstruction" (Chicago *Sun-Times*, 28 June). What this capitalist politician means by "reconstruction" was spelled out in a 6 May column grotesquely titled "Baghdad Plan Can Work Here, Too," in which Jackson called on the Bush administration to bring the colonial occupation of Iraq home and flood the ghettos with cops!

Racist police brutality is an integral part of the American capitalist profit system, and it will not be ended until the system it serves is uprooted through socialist revolution. Benton Harbor is dilapidated and located in a part of the Midwest with a long history of KKK terror. But it is also close to Chicago, Detroit and other industrial cities, where black workers form a crucial part of the labor movement. This is the power that must be mobilized in the fight against racist police terror. But that requires politically breaking from the Democratic Party, whose role is to chain black people and trade unionists to the racist capitalist system. As we wrote when Cincinnati was rocked by a ghetto rebellion against cop brutality ("Cincinnati: Racist Hellhole Boils Over," *WV* No. 757, 27 April 2001):

> "Black workers still constitute a strategic component of the multiracial proletariat, more heavily unionized than white workers. Under the leadership of a revolutionary workers party, black workers can provide a living link to join the fuming anger of the ghettos to the social power of the proletariat and will play a vanguard role in the fight for socialist revolution which will eliminate the whole system of class exploitation and racist repression which the cops 'serve and protect'."■

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The first Labor Black Leagues were formed as a result of the Spartacist League-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982. We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

If You Stand For—

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabherding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting, keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops and prison guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants: everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Down with anti-gay laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom!

6 Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! For class-struggle, nonsectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

—Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge is $3/year unemployed; $10/year employed. For more information, write:

CHICAGO (312) 563-0441
Labor Black Struggle League
Box 6938, Chicago, IL 60680

NEW YORK (212) 267-1025
Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 2502, Church St. Station
New York, NY 10008

OAKLAND (510) 839-0851
Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604

Labor Black League Discussion

Defend the Gains of the Cuban Revolution!

A *Workers Vanguard* readers circle discussion on *WV* No. 805, front page article

Saturday, July 12, 4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318
(1-1/2 blocks north of Chambers St.)

For more information: (212) 267-1025

NEW YORK CITY

Latin American Anti-Semitism and Arab Nationalism

The Brazilian LBI: Centrism of Fools

We reprint below an article translated from Espartaco *No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003), newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM), section of the International Communist League.*

ESPARTACO

German Marxist August Bebel referred to anti-Semitism as "the socialism of fools" because it idiotically blames the depredations of capitalism on the Jews, seeking to derail discontent among workers and the ruined petty bourgeoisie. Centrism is a tendency on the left that tries to hide its reformism with occasional "revolutionary" phrasemongering. The politics of the Liga Bolchevique Internacionalista (LBI) of Brazil are an original combination of both. The LBI's most recent anti-Semitic diatribe is titled "Sweep the ICL [International Communist League] and the IG [Internationalist Group]. Agents of Zionism Disguised as Trotskyists. Out of the Ranks of the Workers Movement!" (*Jornal Luta Operária* [*JLO*], September 2002). This is a slandering provocation and a call for physical violence which should have no place in the workers movement. Calling anyone who stands for the right of the Israeli people to have a piece of land to live on an "agent of Zionism" is simply anti-Semitic. The LBI indeed borrows from the ideology of anti-Semites and the Zionists themselves by branding, in deeds, entire peoples as reactionary.

Last spring, the Zionist butchers carried out, with Washington's consent, the massacre at the refugee camp in Jenin. At the time of that Zionist bloodbath, the ICL declared internationally: "***Defend the Palestinian people!***" Barely a few weeks ago, Israeli army bulldozers destroyed many Palestinian shops in the West Bank and continue to escalate their offensive. The Israeli rulers want to get rid of the Palestinian masses once and for all. We Spartacists fight vigorously to defend the Palestinian people against Zionist terror and call on the world proletariat to demand: Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories! Down with the Zionist terror machine! All imperialist forces out of the Near East! The ICL fights against the bankrupt policies of reliance on either the murderous Arab regimes or the "democratic" imperialism of the UN (which partitioned Palestine to begin with). We stand for the class-struggle solution of destroying the Zionist state from within through workers revolution and resolving the national rights of *all* peoples in the Near East through the struggle for a socialist federation of the region, which requires sweeping away all the sheiks, colonels, monarchs and Zionist butchers.

Anti-Semitism: The Socialism of Fools

The struggle against every manifestation of oppression and backwardness in the consciousness of the masses is crucial to the forging of Leninist vanguard parties capable of leading the proletariat to the final destruction of the world imperialist system through workers revolutions. The Bolsheviks insisted over and over on the necessity of combatting anti-Semitism. One day after the seizure of power, the Congress of Soviets ordered "immediate and most energetic measures for the prevention of counterrevolutionary outbursts, 'anti-Jewish' or other pogroms." In March of 1919, in the middle of the Civil War, Lenin said in one of his few phonographically recorded speeches:

> "Hatred towards the Jews persists only in those countries where slavery to the landlords and capitalists has created abysmal ignorance among the workers and peasants. Only the most ignorant and downtrodden people can believe the lies and slanders that are spread about the Jews...."

Modern anti-Semitism is linked to the rise of capitalism. The heroic young Belgian Trotskyist Abram Leon removed the veil of metaphysical mythology around the history of Jews in his book *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*, finished in 1941 as he organized underground resistance against the Nazis. Leon was captured by the Nazis in 1944 and sent to death in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. In his incisive analysis, Leon situated the continued existence of Jews as a distinct people in Europe during the Middle Ages, and their brutal oppression under capitalism, in the social role they played as a commercial "people-class" in feudal and prefeudal society. This role could only be played by those not indigenous to the medieval feudal structure, whose ecclesiastic authorities formalized the need for an "outside" commercial sector by banning Christians from participating in usury. With the rise of mercantile capitalism, this role came to an end, and the Jews of West Europe were driven out of one country after another. As Leon wrote:

> "The Jews lived within the pores of feudal society. When the feudal structure started to crumble, it began expelling elements which were, at one and the same time, foreign to it and indispensable to it. Even before the peasant had left the village for the industrial center, the Jew had abandoned the small medieval town in order to emigrate to the great cities of the world. The destruction of the secular function of Judaism within feudal society is accompanied by its passive penetration into capitalist society....
>
> "The highly tragic situation of Judaism in our epoch is explained by the extreme precariousness of its social and economic position. The first to be eliminated by decaying feudalism, the Jews were also the first to be rejected by the convulsions of dying capitalism. The Jewish masses find themselves wedged between the anvil of decaying feudalism and the hammer of ruling capitalism."

The October Revolution gave flesh and blood to the promise of Marxism for the Jewish people: that the answer to their persecution lay in socialism. The large number of Jews in the leadership of the revolution and of the early Soviet state (such as Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Joffe, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Sokolnikov—all members of the Bolshevik Central Committee—among many others) is itself evidence of the dramatic leap made by the Jewish people in comparison not only to the horrors of the tsarist autocracy but even to the most advanced "democratic" countries of the West.

Latin American anti-Semitism is also an inheritance of the barbarism of the Inquisition, which murdered thousands of Jews in the colonial epoch, perpetuated by the hegemonic Catholic church, itself a remnant of the Middle Ages.

Espartaco

Spartacist-initiated speakout at Mexico City's UNAM campus, April 2002. Placards include: "Defend the Palestinian People! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!"

Bettmann

Jews burned at stake during Spanish Inquisition around 1492.

Anti-Semitism meant that only a few Jews migrated to Mexico (or New Spain) throughout its history. This prejudice has been reinforced by the xenophobic bourgeois nationalism that prevails in this part of the world; in the 1930s anti-Semitic bigotry grew together with the exaltation of "Mexicanicity." It is common in this country for anti-Semitic epithets to be hurled against capitalist rulers, university directors, etc. Brazil—the largest Catholic country in the world—presents a similar picture. In the late 1930s, the fascistic government of Getúlio Vargas refused to grant visas to Jewish refugees from the Nazi Holocaust, condemning thousands to death in the concentration camps. In those years, elements in the Alianza Nacional Libertadora, created by the Brazilian Communist Party, often associated imperialism with Judaism (Jeffrey Lesser, *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil & the Jewish Question*). Oswaldo Aranha, former adviser to Getúlio Vargas and in 1947 General Secretary of the UN, together with Brazil's representative to that den of thieves, João Carlos Muniz, actively supported the resolution that created Israel. The reason: "the Rio de Janeiro neighborhood of Copacabana would be returned to the Brazilians" (ibid.). Not coincidentally, loads of Nazis made their way to Latin America via the CIA/Vatican "rat line." These Nazi criminals trained the official and unofficial torture experts from the Chilean junta to the Nicaraguan contras.

The nationalist Latin American left has a whole history of reflecting the anti-Semitism of the ruling class, but the LBI seems determined to leave its competitors behind. In 1997, it published a revolting polemic accusing as a "new Christian" a former Stalinist who had

recently joined the pseudo-Trotskyist Brazilian PSTU. As we explained in 1998: "'New Christian' is the epithet with which the bloody Inquisition branded for life the Jews who, under penalty of being burnt alive or, if they were lucky, being deported, converted to Christianity.... The LBI, by repeating that disgusting anti-Semitic slander, shows its adaptation to the most repulsive prejudices of bourgeois society and the pestilence of its true program" ("El Centrismo a la Torquemada," *Espartaco* No. 11, Spring-Summer 1998). With disgusting cynicism, the LBI recently republished its anti-Semitic article as part of a pamphlet!

Trotskyism vs. Bourgeois Nationalism

In "Sweep the ICL...," the LBI also accuses us of being "pro-imperialist" for having refused to support Galtieri's bloody Argentine *gorillas* against Britain in the war—reactionary on both sides—over the Malvinas/Falklands islands, which was nothing other than a trick to derail toward "defense of the fatherland" the working-class discontent rocking the dictatorship (see "Trotskyism vs. Nationalism in Latin America," *Spartacist* [Spanish-language edition] No. 28, January 1998). They further whine because we refused to give any support whatsoever to the anti-communist, anti-woman murderer Ayatollah Khomeini in the misnamed "Iranian revolution" of 1979 (see "¡Defender al Pueblo Palestino!" *Espartaco* No. 15, Spring-Summer 2001). In reality, what they cannot stand is our consistent record of internationalist struggle for the political independence of the proletariat—and, in the case of Iran, for the very existence of the workers movement.

They go on to slander us as having acted as "spokesmen" for the White House and having become "a left appendix of American 'democracy'" for having declared unambiguously that the attack on the World Trade Center of 11 September 2001 "was an indefensible act of criminal terror" (*Espartaco* No. 16, Fall-Winter 2001; *WV* No. 764, 14 September 2001). Instead, the LBI held that the attack on the WTC was a legitimate act "by the Islamic militants who responded militarily to the permanent war that imperialism imposes on the peoples and oppressed nations of the Near East, by means of the unconventional 'military' resources they had available." The "unconventional 'military' resources" to which the LBI refers were civilian airliners full of passengers! The attack on

Editions La Brèche

Abram Leon, author of *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Analysis*.

the WTC was designed to massacre as many people—ordinary working people from dozens of countries—as possible. It was a *gift* to the imperialists, who used it as an excuse to unleash their murderous war machine under the mantle of the "war on terrorism" while attacking immigrants and workers at home. When the American rulers bombed Afghanistan, we called for the defense of Afghanistan without giving any political support to the reactionary anti-woman Taliban cutthroats (see "Defend Afghanistan Against Imperialist Attack!" *WV* No. 766, 12 October 2001; *Espartaco* No. 17, Winter 2001-2002). In contrast, the LBI asserted that the workers killed in the attack on the WTC were a "minority" among "CIA agents"! (*Marxismo Revolucionário*, December 2001). By putting an equal sign between the working masses and their exploiters and oppressors, the LBI adopts the mentality both of the fanatics who perpetrated the attack *and* of the racist American rulers. The LBI's vicarious bloodthirstiness is the result of their nationalist outlook, discarding any possibility of ***internationalist class struggle*** and the revolutionary destruction of the American imperialist beast from within through workers revolution.

The LBI asserts: "For the ICL, the headquarters of the Pentagon are an innocent civilian 'institution,' inhabited by 'innocent lives'" (*Marxismo Revolucionário*, December 2001). They can only resort to outright lies in order to attack revolutionary Marxists. This is what we said:

> "Unlike the World Trade Center, which was simply a complex of buildings housing various businesses employing tens of thousands of working people, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and rather quintessentially represents the military might of U.S. imperialism, the main enemy of the working people and oppressed of the world....
>
> "The Pentagon is a genuine military target, representing the brutal attacks of U.S. imperialism on the world's working class and oppressed."
>
> —*WV* No. 766, 12 October 2001

Defend the Palestinian People! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

In "Sweep the ICL...," the LBI criticizes the newspaper of our American comrades, *Workers Vanguard* (No. 744, 20 October 2000), lying that the ICL "openly upholds the existence side by side of the Zionist state and a Palestinian state" (*JLO*, November-December 2000). The LBI has a lot of cynicism, but very little wit. This is what our comrades actually wrote:

> "We call for the right of national self-determination for both the Palestinian Arab *and* the Hebrew-speaking peoples. In such a situation of *interpenetrated peoples*—of two nations laying claim to the same land—there can be no equitable and democratic resolution to these conflicting national rights within the framework of capitalism. As we first elaborated in 'Birth of the Zionist State Part 2: The 1948 War' (*WV* No. 45, 24 May 1974):
>
> "'It was clear that the establishment of an independent nation-state, either by Palestinian Arabs or the Jews, would occur in Palestine only at the expense of the other nation. When national populations are geographically interpenetrated, as they were in Palestine, an independent nation-state can be created only by their forcible separation (forced population transfers, etc.). Thus the democratic right of self-determination becomes abstract, as it can be exercised only by the stronger national grouping driving out or destroying the weaker one.
>
> "'In such cases the only possibility of a democratic solution lies in a social transformation'."

The Zionist state of Israel is not the same as the Hebrew-speaking people. The imperialist-sponsored partition of Palestine in 1947 and the creation of the state of Israel came on the heels of the Nazi Holocaust—the greatest catastrophe ever suffered by Jewish people and one of the greatest atrocities ever inflicted on humanity. As a result of the influx of several hundred thousand refugees—who were not allowed into other countries like the U.S. or Britain—from Nazi Germany and the concentration camps, what had previously been a small colony of Zionist settlers in Palestine was transformed into a nation. The point at which this occurred can be placed at the defeat of the general strike and Arab uprising of 1936-39, after which the Palestinian Jews had a functioning closed economy, essentially independent of the Arab communities. This separation laid the basis for the development of the Jewish economy during the Second World War, when the isolation of Palestine compelled the development of entire new industries. The Hebrew nation came into existence through force and violence, through the suppression, forced expulsion and genocide of other peoples. The same is true for most nations, including those of Latin America. Communists must oppose this brutal national oppression, but once this historical fact is accomplished, we must certainly recognize that nation's right to self-determination, unless we prefer the alternative: national genocide.

There can be no democratic, secular ***capitalist*** Palestine. But there can be no genuine expression of Palestinian self-determination without the destruction of the Zionist state, which is inherently oppressive to the Palestinian people. Every "solution" to the Palestinian national question under capitalism either perpetuates the oppression of the Palestinian Arab people or envisions a reversal of the terms of oppression, denying the legitimate national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. Both Palestinian Arabs and Hebrew-speaking Israelis live in and lay claim to a small sliver of land in the Near East. Under capitalism, the exercise of national self-determination by either people will necessarily be at the expense of the other. The national emancipation of the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—necessarily entails workers revolutions to sweep away the Hasbemite kingdom of Jordan and the bloody Ba'athist bonapartists in Syria, to bring down the capitalist rulers of Lebanon and to shatter the Zionist state, establishing a socialist federation of the Near East. Thus, socialist revolution will provide the only just and equitable solution to the national aspirations of *both* Palestinian Arabs *and* the Hebrew-speaking people. The resources of the region can be shared between these nations only by means of ***workers power*** that sweeps away the Zionist butchers, the bonapartist colonels and the feudalist sheiks throughout the Near East. A binational Trotskyist party is required, seeking to lead the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers in ***internationalist class struggle*** together with the workers of the rest of the Near East. Such a party can be forged only in defense of the Palestinian people against Zionist terror, without giving an iota of political support to the petty-bourgeois nationalism of Arafat's PLO, in sharp struggle against the reactionary outlook of anti-communist, woman-hating Islamic fundamentalists of the Hamas type, and in opposition to any confidence in the reactionary Arab regimes and all the imperialist agencies.

The Zionist state, led by genocidal reactionaries who long for "holy war" against their 200 million Arab neighbors, ***is also a death trap for Jews***. As Trotsky wrote in 1940, on the eve of the Holocaust:

> "The future development of military events may well transform Palestine into a bloody trap for several hundred thousand Jews. Never was it so clear as it is today that the salvation of the Jewish people is bound up inseparably with the overthrow of the capitalist system."
>
> —"Leon Trotsky on the Jewish Question" (Pathfinder, 1970)

And so it remains. The Zionist "dream" has revealed itself to be a hideous nightmare. During World War II Western Zionists not only accepted—and fostered—the racist closed-door policy of the imperialist "democracies" toward Jewish refugees but even collaborated with the Nazis in order to secure handfuls of emigrants for Palestine to carve a reactionary nation-state out of the living body of the Palestinian Arab people. In the early '90s the Zionists adopted a similar "commonality of interests" with the likes of the Russian fascist anti-Semites of Pamyat. Indeed, the Israeli bourgeoisie would *prefer* to see persecution of Jews rage throughout the world in order to bolster their lie that only

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Reuters

1994 bombing of Jewish Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina left 86 dead and 300 wounded.

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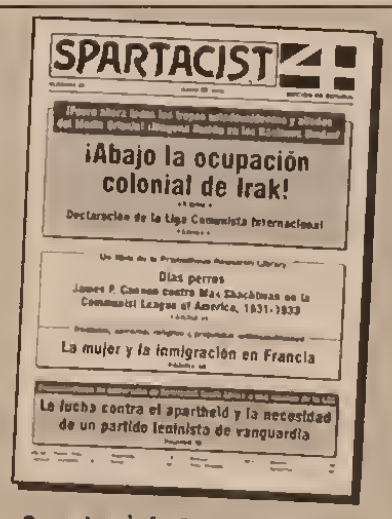

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SARS: Capitalism, Racism and Public Health

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada *No. 137 (Summer 2003), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/ Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.*

In six months the SARS epidemic has infected more than 8,000 people worldwide, killing over 750. In Toronto, the

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epicenter of the disease outside East Asia, SARS has killed 30 people and infected more than 300, and is still spreading. This virulent disease is wreaking havoc in China where the dismantling of the planned economy has left hundreds of millions without health care. In Canada SARS put a spotlight on the wreckage of Ontario's public health care system after over a decade of brutal budget-slashing, layoffs and hospital closures by NDP [social democratic New Democratic Party] and Tory governments alike.

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) is thought to have been transmitted from animals to humans in the markets of the Guangdong region of China last November. On February 21, a sick doctor from China visited Hong Kong, unwittingly infecting travelers from Hanoi, Toronto and Singapore who infected others when they got home. At that point little was known about SARS, though it was known that a serious atypical pneumonia had killed people in China. These first patients were not isolated and many hospital workers became ill. On March 14, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued a worldwide alert about SARS.

While the numbers affected by SARS are minute beside the millions killed by AIDS and malaria, the death rate from the disease is very high—put at 7-10 percent by the WHO and almost 20 percent in Hong Kong according to a new *Lancet* study. With no effective treatment or vaccine, SARS has spawned enormous panic and social and economic dislocations through Asia and Canada. The hysteria accompanying the SARS outbreak in Toronto has far outstripped the virus itself, which so far is largely confined to hospitals. For many weeks, restaurants, stores, churches and sports arenas were deserted. Subway ridership fell by 50,000 a day. Schools canceled field trips, big corporations kept their executives out of Toronto, and major conventions canceled one after another. U.S. tabloids blared that Toronto was a "Pariah City."

Hysteria mixed with anti-Chinese racism in a poisonous cocktail. Asians were shunned on Toronto subways, restaurants openly segregated people of Asian appearance and schoolchildren were taunted with calls of "Chinese, go away." A woman who lost two family members to SARS said bitterly, "People treat us like monsters. They say we eat like rats and live like pigs" ([Toronto] *Globe and Mail*, 8 April). In the Maritimes, Acadia University told students from China, though ***not*** Toronto, to stay away. The University of California in Berkeley threatened to ban all students from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore (but again not Toronto). While it eventually allowed some 80 of these students to enroll, 500 were still kept out.

Alongside the hysteria and bigotry has been a widespread and quite rational belief that the ruling class was royally screwing this up. Lives depend on rapid containment of SARS, but Canada's capitalist rulers have responded with chauvinism, incompetence and above all an indifference born of capitalist greed to the well-being of the population. Toronto's first announcements on SARS were not even translated into Chinese. Told by the WHO to implement screening at airports, Health Canada [the federal department of health] arrogantly refused, whining about cost. Vietnam and Singapore quickly installed the thermal-imaging sensors to detect the high fever that is a symptom of SARS, but not Canada even though Vancouver is one of the few places these machines are made! After a couple of suspected Canadian SARS cases turned up in other countries, and a woman from Canada died of SARS in the Philippines, the WHO issued a travel advisory on Canada because SARS was not properly contained here. There were howls of injured national outrage, but if SARS spreads to poverty-stricken countries in Africa and Asia it could kill millions.

The impact of SARS has hit the working class hard. Up to 10,000 people were quarantined in Toronto at the height of the outbreak. In a new outbreak, by late May some 7,000 more were in quarantine. The "lucky" ones in union jobs have been forced to use up sick time or holidays, but others had nothing to fall back on. The Ontario government's initial categorical refusal to provide any compensation for these workers undermined this basic public health measure, as some people broke their quarantine, fearing they would not otherwise survive economically.

Free, Quality Health Care for All!

SARS is also being used by the airline bosses to further slash their unionized workforces. Internationally, airline officials say SARS has hit them harder than the combined effects of 9/11 and the imperialist war on Iraq. But bankrupt Air Canada is invoking SARS to demand an immediate 10 percent pay cut and another 10,000 layoffs, part of its drive to gut the unions and slash wages and jobs. Airline union leaders have rolled over before these attacks, agreeing to mass layoffs and other givebacks.

SARS directly cost 27,000 jobs in Ontario in April, 12,000 in hotels and restaurants alone. Many of these workers are part-time and will be lucky to get a dime under the draconian employment insurance rules. The fact that ***14,000*** of these jobs were lost in the health sector amid a medical emergency is stunning. These workers are SARS "collateral damage," the result of shutting down outpatient facilities and stopping treatment of any but the most critical cases, even seriously ill cardiac patients. Already cancer patients had to endure a life-threatening two-month wait for surgery. With SARS this has now grown to more than three months.

Spartacist Canada

Ananova

Toronto: May 10 protest against health care privatization (left). Paramedics move SARS patient.

Capitalist Austerity Shreds Health Care

Effective treatment of SARS requires great medical resources—respirators, antibiotics, isolation wards, diagnostic equipment, protective gear and many nurses and doctors—things poverty-stricken countries in Asia and Africa lack. But in wealthy imperialist Canada, health care has been deliberately eviscerated by capitalist austerity. When SARS hit Toronto, there were not enough nurses, doctors, hospital beds, laboratories and diagnostic services to handle "regular" needs, let alone this medical emergency.

Since 1995, when the Conservatives under Mike Harris came to power, billions have been slashed from health care and other vital social services. After mass layoffs and dozens of hospital closures, there are ***25,000*** fewer health care workers than in 1995. Medicare covers less and less and people pay huge sums—$1,072 per person this year—for procedures no longer covered. An astounding 900,000 Ontarians do not have a family doctor.

The New Democrats have complained loudly about the cuts to health care, demanding a debate in the parliamentary talkshop. But it was Bob Rae's NDP government in the early 1990s that paved the way for this onslaught. They slashed billions from social services, education and health care, closing hospitals and eliminating free prescriptions for the poor and elderly. In a vindictive racist act, they withdrew medical coverage for refugee claimants. The union-busting "social contract" slashed public sector workers' paychecks. The Conservatives brutally escalated these attacks in tandem with sweeping cuts to health care and other social services by the Chrétien Liberals in Ottawa.

The irrational destruction of health care and basic infrastructure has hit virtually every aspect of public life in Canada. It has also taken lives. Three years ago, after Ontario's water testing facilities were privatized, seven people in the town of Walkerton died from the *E. coli* bacterium, and more than 2,300 became ill. A year later the Tories got rid of Ontario's top five microbiologists, blithely and stupidly declaring that "It would be highly unlikely that we would find a new organism in Ontario"! Faced with a new and dangerous mosquito-born virus, West Nile, the chief scientist researching it was fired. In Alberta, it took five months to perform tests on the carcass of a cow now known to have mad cow disease, significantly increasing the danger that the disease entered the food chain. Willfully destroying the technical facilities needed to respond to infectious diseases, the capitalist rulers cannot even guarantee the most basic public health measures to ensure water that's safe to drink and food that's safe to eat.

The ripping up of what was known as the "welfare state" is a global phenomenon. The decade since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union has seen brutal and unremitting attacks on the workers and oppressed everywhere. The Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, acted as a counterweight to global imperialist domination and undercut the capitalists' ability to carry out wholesale attacks on the working class. But since its destruction the capitalists no longer feel the need to fend off the "threat of Communism" by means of reforms, health services and welfare provision, which were designed to buy off working-class resistance.

Savage attacks on the unions and social programs have ripped through the living conditions and basic rights of the working class as the capitalists drive to maximize profits and compete internationally. At every level—from the devastation brought to the people of the former Soviet Union, to the wreckage of social programs in West Europe and North America, to the sharp increase in bloody imperialist wars from the Balkans to Iraq—capitalist restoration in the former USSR has been an unmitigated disaster for working people everywhere.

Nurses on the Frontlines

On every front the heroic efforts of nurses, doctors and others to contain SARS and protect themselves have run up against an increasingly decrepit Canadian public health system. There has been little coordination of services, information and resources, all crucial to controlling an infectious disease. Infection control procedures in Toronto hospitals are substandard: some single-use medical devices such as EMG needles and catheters are used more than 20 times. Even the masks used to prevent infection have been considered obsolete in the U.S. for 30 years!

Little wonder so many health care workers have been infected.

The huge layoffs starting ten years ago saw thousands of nurses laid off. Only 54 percent of Ontario nurses now work at full-time jobs. Many are casuals working on call from hospital to hospital. Because of the SARS risk, thousands of these nurses have been thrown out of work, with others forced to work massive overtime.

Hundreds of nurses have been quarantined. Even with the added punishing conditions imposed by SARS—the double gowns and masks, the tension and fear—nurses have still had to work brutal 12-hour shifts. Nurses and doctors are the heroes of the SARS outbreak, but they have also born the brunt of the disease. Fully two-thirds of SARS cases are health care workers and their families. Grotesquely, some nurses who became ill with SARS were not "officially" diagnosed with it, thus denying them Workers Compensation. Nurses have endured wage freezes, rollbacks and repeated strikebreaking back-to-work laws whenever they have fought back. Small wonder SARS was the last straw for many and some simply quit.

Public Health, Capitalism and Racism

When epidemics strike, public health measures are required which are sometimes drastic and intrusive but necessary to save lives. There is always tension between public health and individual rights, but which has more weight at a given moment can only be decided by examining the particular health threat posed. With no vaccine or reliable treatment for SARS, quarantine is the only way to isolate and contain it. Similarly, screening international travelers at airports to detect potentially symptomatic people could reduce SARS' spread and save lives. Yet such public health measures are indelibly stamped by the race and class biases of this capitalist society.

The most powerful contemporary example of this is AIDS. From the outset AIDS, intersecting disease and sex, has been manipulated in the service of bigotry and reaction. In 1982, public health authorities knew that it could be transmitted sexually, and that the risk of contracting AIDS was maximized by promiscuity. Studies had shown that the people who frequented the San Francisco bathhouses were getting sick at a very high rate. The logical thing would be to slow the already exponential spread of the disease. Closing the baths, an extraordinary public health measure, could have helped to alert gay men most at risk, who were either uninformed or dismissive of the facts, that they were at risk for contracting a fatal disease. But, as we wrote in *Women and Revolution*:

> "Could a government of Anita Bryants and Jerry Falwells have convinced gay people about anything? It was not so unreasonable that in 1981 and 1982 many gays reacted to the rumors of a new killer disease spread through sex as if it were a lie to create anti-gay hysteria. This is a classic Catch-22. ***In fact, this vicious anti-gay bigotry is precisely why the bathhouses were not closed down.***"
>
> —"The Agony of AIDS," No. 35 (Summer 1988)

Every approach to AIDS—research, prevention, medical care, education—has been treated with criminal neglect. The Canadian government and Red Cross *knowingly* distributed potentially deadly blood and blood products during the 1980s, infecting more than 1,200 people with AIDS, including 800 hemophiliacs, because the capitalist ghouls running this state deemed it too costly to test the blood. Even after this, thousands more people were infected with Hepatitis C after receiving contaminated blood.

Underscoring the absolute indifference of the bosses to the lives of working people, when the anthrax scare hit in the wake of 9/11, the U.S. Postal Service let unknown numbers of postal workers get infected. Yet nothing was overlooked to protect a handful of U.S. Senators—even Capitol Hill police dogs got tested for anthrax before postal workers did.

AP

Michael Reynolds

SARS isolation hospital under construction on outskirts of Beijing (above). Beijing sign boasts that Communist Party will conquer SARS. Stalinists' own "market reforms" undermine such efforts.

The anti-Asian racism that accompanied SARS is deeply rooted in this country. Marked by explosive pogromist violence such as the 1907 Vancouver riots, anti-immigrant racism has always been entwined with hysteria about disease. Fifteen thousand Chinese workers came here in the 19th century to build the railroads. 2,000 of whom died from the cruel and dangerous conditions under which they toiled. A few caught leprosy (Hansen's Disease) in the overcrowded camps. Even then it was known that leprosy was not highly contagious, yet the Chinese who got this disease were treated with great brutality. In 1882 a Chinese man with leprosy was lynched. Others ended up in Canada's own leper colony for Chinese people on D'Arcy Island near Victoria, a prison visited a few times a year by ships carrying food, drugs and opium. In Calgary during an 1892 smallpox outbreak, a racist mob rampaged through Chinatown after a Chinese man was released from quarantine.

Such venomous racism is not dusty old history. When four boats carrying desperate would-be immigrants from Fujian, China washed up on the B.C. [British Columbia] coast in 1999, the hysteria against them was replete with all the inflammatory racist saws of 100 years earlier about Asian immigrants spreading syphilis, malaria and other diseases.

It is breathtaking that the North American capitalist rulers and their mouthpieces attack immigrants as bearers of disease, be it SARS, AIDS or anything else. Europeans brought such pestilence and death to North and South America that 90 percent of the original inhabitants, lacking the immunities of their English, Spanish and French conquerors, were simply wiped out by smallpox, cholera and other diseases. And some of it was deliberate, as in distributing blankets infested with smallpox to the Native peoples.

Vietnamese Workers State Contains SARS

The Canadian capitalist rulers were furious when the WHO lumped them in with countries like China. More galling was to be unfavorably contrasted with economically weak Vietnam, the first country to contain SARS. In 1975 the Vietnamese workers and peasants dealt the U.S. imperialists a stunning battlefield defeat, smashing capitalist rule in the South and ending almost 30 years of bloody imperialist war in which two million Vietnamese people were killed. Today, especially after the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, Vietnam's economy is in dire straits. Here, as in China, the bureaucrats at the head of the Vietnamese deformed workers state are moving toward so-called "market reforms," a deadly danger to the gains of the Vietnamese Revolution. Yet even now, Vietnam's ability to deal with SARS speaks to the capacities and potentials of a workers state organized on lines other than capitalist profit.

Vietnam threw enormous social resources into combating SARS. As soon as a patient at the Hanoi French Hospital appeared with an unusual and serious flu-like virus, the hospital notified the WHO. When medical staff started to fall ill, the government quickly organized to combat the outbreak. Patients were isolated and sent to two designated Hanoi hospitals. Contacts of the infected were assiduously traced and visited daily, while infrared machines were set up at airport and border crossings to detect people with high temperatures. An infectious disease specialist with Médecins sans Frontières, Carlo Urbani, who went to Vietnam to assist this work, later died of SARS. Vietnam had only 63 cases of SARS, more than half health care workers, and five deaths, four of whom were nurses and doctors.

China: The Deadly Mix of "Market Reforms" and SARS

SARS is sending shock waves through the Chinese deformed workers state. Fueled by bureaucratic venality, lies and cover-ups and, more than anything, by the destruction of public health in the service of the accelerating drive to capitalist restoration, SARS has infected well over 5,000 people and killed over 300. The Chinese bureaucracy criminally hid the nature and extent of this disease, issuing nostrums to soothe their capitalist investors while doing little to inform the Chinese people. The disease has now spread to rural areas and distant regions like Inner Mongolia.

Months late, the Chinese bureaucracy is now aggressively trying to deal with the SARS epidemic, even constructing an entire hospital in a few days. Because China is still based on a nationalized economy, the country is able to marshal resources to combat the disease. But this is highly contradictory and at times stupidly brutal, invoking, for example, the death penalty for those who break quarantine.

As part of its anti-SARS campaign, the Chinese government is resurrecting the memory of Norman Bethune, the courageous Canadian Communist doctor who died on the Long March in 1939 while serving with the Chinese Red Army. Yet this same Stalinist bureaucracy is destroying the enormous gains of the 1949 Revolution, not least the health care system that was a signal achievement of the planned economy. In contrast to capitalist India or other "Third World" countries where the masses have long lived in abject misery reinforced by imperialist subjugation, in China even the most remote villages received basic care from "barefoot doctors," medical personnel with minimal training. Health campaigns aimed at improving sanitation and providing clean drinking water helped control diseases like TB and neonatal tetanus. But the "market reforms" initiated by Deng Xiaoping, who came to power in 1978, have changed all this, disastrously.

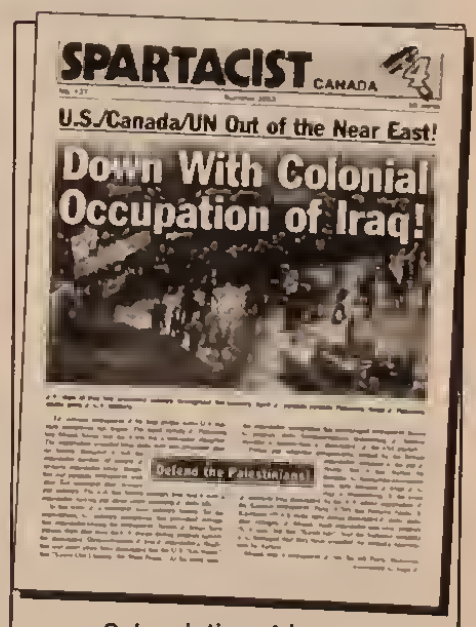
An *Asia Times Online* (19 April) article notes there are now "hundreds of millions of peasants in the Chinese countryside without even basic preventative care." Along with factory closures and layoffs, public health services, preventative care, disease surveillance and medical control have collapsed, a perfect culture medium for an epidemic. China has inadequate respirators, drugs and isolation facilities to respond to the crisis. In the countryside, where many of the clinics and hospitals have closed down, the situation is grimmer. In a vast country that once had free health care, SARS patients are being turned away if they cannot make hefty cash down payments for their care. As a farmer in Qingxu near Beijing said, "A peasant's life in China has never been worth anything. I made $300 last year, and I'm rich compared with some of my neighbors. But it costs $250 to go to the hospital."

Recent years have seen massive explosions of proletarian anger as the bureaucracy dismantles the planned economy that was the legacy of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. The ravages of privatization and closure of state-owned industries have left millions of workers without the guaranteed housing, education, medical and retirement benefits that came with those jobs.

Distrust of the authorities has fuelled SARS' spread and ignited pre-existing social tinder. Students and migrant workers have fled Beijing back to their home towns, some bringing SARS with them. SARS patients are fleeing hospitals to die at home and in one village, angry and frightened peasants rioted, destroying a facility meant to hold SARS patients. In some rural areas, oracles and prayers are filling the void left by the destruction of medical care.

Even the *Wall Street Journal* (19 May),

continued on page 11



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Young Spartacus

Germany: Apologists for Zionist Terror Attack Spartakist Youth Meeting

On June 23, our comrades of the Spartakist Jugend, youth group of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD), held a speakout at Berlin's Humboldt University to protest an attack by the anti-Palestinian "anti-nationals" on one of our classes a few days before. Our comrades mobilized with a bullhorn to loudly denounce this attempt to shut down a leftist meeting and to let the "anti-national" thugs know we wouldn't be intimidated. Many of those who watched our demonstration appreciated our forthright defense of the Palestinians. This included three Palestinian construction workers who were working nearby. Discussions with them ranged from defense of the Palestinians to the need to combat Arab nationalism and to draw a clear line against anti-Semitism. These workers each bought a copy of *Spartakist*, newspaper of the SpAD, and gave a small donation to the party. Some of the students who supported us also wanted to help defend our next public class at Humboldt, titled "Defend the Palestinians!", which the "anti-national" goons have threatened to attack.

We reprint below a 23 June leaflet issued by the Spartakist Jugend and distributed at the speakout.

* * *

On June 19, a gang of so-called "anti-nationals" tried to break up a public class of the Spartakist Jugend on "The Holocaust, German Imperialism and Zionism: How the Anti-Semitic German Bourgeoisie Aids the State of Israel." Acting like Hitlerite stormtroopers on the campuses in the early 1930s, three of these apologists for Zionist terror against the Palestinians burst into the room, with one of them ripping up a copy of our newspaper and screaming that we deserved "a punch in the mouth." When those who had come to attend the class defended the meeting against this anti-communist provocateur and put him out the door, he and his two accomplices threatened that they would attack our next class.

All those who cherish the right to free speech, all defenders of the besieged Palestinian people should rally in opposition to this violent attempt to shut down a leftist meeting. This attack, like repeated previous attempts to disrupt pro-Palestinian left-wing meetings, is a frontal assault on the rights of *all* at Humboldt University to express their political views. We welcome the open clash of different views, because such is critical to raising the political consciousness of radical youth, working people and others who seek to fight against exploitation and oppression. Indeed, two "anti-nationals" who did not join in trying to disrupt the meeting were allowed to stay and take part in the discussion. Come to our next class on July 3 to stand up against any further attempt at anti-communist thuggery and political censorship!

The "anti-nationals" are a conglomeration of ex-leftists who came together in 1990, following the counterrevolutionary annexation of the East German deformed workers state by the Fourth Reich of German imperialism. They have embraced many forces, including U.S. imperialism. Thus, they took a side with U.S. imperialism against Iraq in the first Gulf War of 1991 and supported the Russian colonial war against Chechnya in 1994. Today, their spectrum extends from those like *Jungle World* who supported the antiwar movement to those like the Berlin Anti-German Communists who hailed the imperialist bloodbath against the Iraqis: "It is comforting that the Americans will once again have the better weapons." The day the attack on Iraq began, they yelled at the tens of thousands of militant students who took to the streets that they should "shut up." The Open Communist Forum South hailed the occupation of Iraq: "And today is a good day for Israel. The conditions for the creation of a new democracy in the Near East have been won" ("Free! Free Baghdad!—Rejoice Over the Ruin of the Regime," 9 April). What all wings of the "anti-nationals" have in common is their denunciation of any who defend the Palestinians against Zionist state terror.

Spartakist

June 23: Spartakist youth speak out against attack by "anti-national" thugs at Humboldt University.

The "anti-nationals" who attack defenders of the Palestinians as "anti-Semites," a charge they hurled against us in attacking our meeting, are apologists for the racist German imperialist bourgeoisie. Their call for "solidarity with Israel" is nothing other than support for the genocidal war of terror being perpetrated by the Zionist state against the Palestinians. Waving the banner of "collective guilt," they simultaneously amnesty the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz and the Zionist rulers who today ape the Nazis.

"Collective guilt" is used to whitewash those who are really guilty of the mass murder of millions of Jews, Communists, Roma [Gypsies], homosexuals and countless others, shifting the blame for the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust from the German capitalist rulers to the German people as a whole. As Israeli liberal Amos Alon put it, "Ritualized lip service to guilt serves to give the new nationalism and the new xenophobia a good conscience." The cynical cry of "no more Holocausts" is used to justify the renewed march of German militarism, including the first deployment of German combat units since the end of World War II in the Balkans in 1999.

Taking their cue, the "anti-nationals" try to silence the voice of those who denounce the crimes of German imperialism past and present. The Zionist rulers with whom they solidarize were themselves guilty of collaboration with Hitler's Nazis, reflecting their stated "commonality of interests": the fascists wanted the Jews out of Europe, so did the Zionists. German imperialism has been one of the biggest backers, militarily and financially, of the Zionist state from its inception.

There *has* been a rise in anti-Semitic attacks in Germany, and this is the direct product of capitalist reunification in 1990, which we Spartakists fought against down the line. In October 1999, when the Jewish cemetery in Berlin Weissensee was desecrated on the night that German reunification is celebrated, we immediately organized a protest at Humboldt University and argued for worker/immigrant mobilizations to stop the fascists. Those who argue that anti-Zionism equals anti-Semitism echo the German bourgeoisie, which wields the "war on terror" to persecute Arabs and those of Turkish and Kurdish origin in Germany.

The "anti-nationals" hate us for our proletarian *internationalist* championing of the national rights of the oppressed Palestinian people. It is only from such an internationalist standpoint that one can fight against all national oppression without giving quarter to any manifestation of racism or chauvinism, be it anti-Semitism, Zionism or Arab nationalism. Only through the proletarian overthrow of both the Israeli bourgeoisie and all the Arab ruling classes can the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples be equitably resolved in a socialist federation of the Near East.

We seek to win leftist youth and workers who oppose anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant racism and all forms of oppression to the fight to forge a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that can lead the proletariat in sweeping away the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz. Join us!■

Spartacus Youth Club Classes & Events

BAY AREA

Alternate Saturdays, 6 p.m.

July 12: **Defend the Gains of the Chinese, Cuban, Vietnamese and North Korean Revolutions!**

July 26: **Black Oppression Is the Bedrock of U.S. Capitalism—For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

1634 Telegraph Avenue, 3rd floor
Downtown Oakland
(near the 19th St. BART)

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Saturdays, 5 p.m.

July 12: **The Leninist Struggle Against Imperialism**

July 26: **The Russian Revolution of 1917**

222 S. Morgan, ring buzzer #23
(Blue Line, UIC-Halsted stop)

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441 or
e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

July 12: **The Workers Revolution vs. The Guerrilla Road**

July 26: **Defend China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam Against Imperialist Attack and Counterrevolution!**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

TORONTO

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

July 19: **Defend China, North Korea Against Imperialist Attack and Counterrevolution!**

August 2: **Marxism vs. Anarchism—For a Revolutionary Workers Party!**

Ontario Institute for Studies in
Education, Room 8201
252 Bloor St. West
(above St. George Station)

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

BOSTON

Alternate Saturdays, 3:30 p.m.

July 12: **The Leninist Fight Against Imperialist War**

July 26: **For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Harvard University, Loker Common

Information and readings: (617) 666-9453 or
e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Saturdays, 1 p.m.

July 12: **Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Blacks—For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

July 26: **Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq—U.S. Imperialism Hands Off the World!**

299 Broadway, Suite 318
(between Reade and Duane Streets)

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Tuesday, July 8, 7 p.m.

Columbia University
607 Hamilton Hall

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Students Interrogated for Dissing Bush

Secret Service Says: That Joke Isn't Funny Anymore

Wouldn't it suck if you lived in a country where you couldn't tell a joke in class without ending up in handcuffs? Well, guess what, you do! On April 23, the Secret Service dragged two 16-year-old Southeast Asian Oakland High School (OHS) students out of class for cracking an anti-Bush joke. It's no accident OHS students were targeted, as they were some of the most militant antiwar protesters during the bloody U.S. onslaught against Iraq. As the Feds interrogated the suspected "terrorist" youth, it was clear that the real terrorists were the racist, anti-immigrant cops!

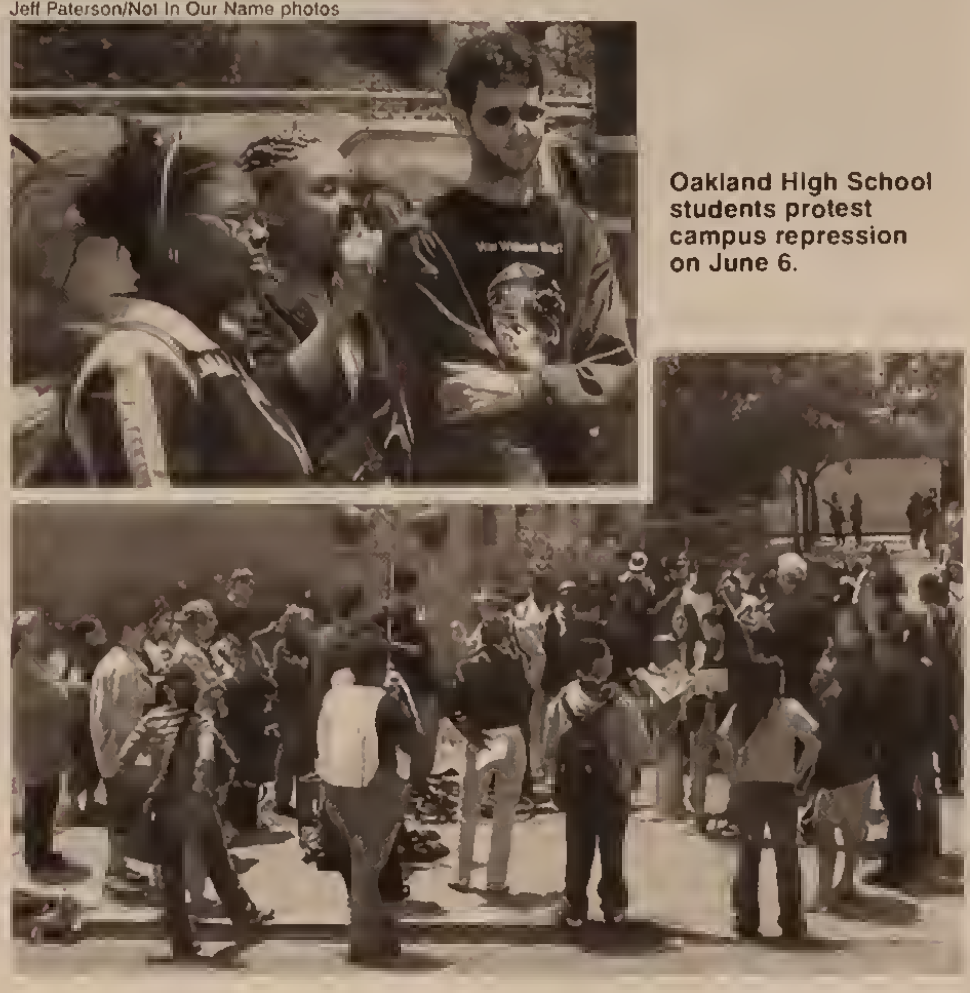
During a classroom discussion about the imperialist mass murder of Iraqis, one of the students said, "Bush is wacked," and the other, "Someone should take care of him (Bush)" (*Oakland Tribune*, 4 May). The students' teacher, acting as one of Bush's "good citizen informants," called the San Francisco office of the Secret Service to report the comments. The next day, the Feds arrived and hauled the two youth out of their sixth-period classes for "questioning." Neither lawyers nor the students' parents were present during the interrogation, only the school's principal, Clement Mok, who sat back and let the agents "do their jobs."

Over the course of the interrogation, the youth were reduced to tears when the agents threatened to deport their parents. One of the students found the courage to insist that he be allowed to remain silent until he had contacted a lawyer. The agents replied, "We own you, if you don't talk to us now, and we find out you haven't told us everything, we'll put you in federal prison. This is the beginning of the end for you" (Indymedia.org).

On June 6, outraged Oakland students, teachers and parents held a rally protesting this grotesque assault on student civil rights. It is popular to demand the ouster of Mok, who has earned the hatred of many for confiscating leaflets and threatening to suspend students who were passing out flyers for an antiwar walkout on March 5. In an attempt to stop students from carrying out their protest, Mok even went so far as to lock and run barbed wire along the gates surrounding the school, after which a small fire broke out with students trapped on campus.

Although we wouldn't shed a tear if Mok did get the boot, the fundamental problems with a lousy, racist, class-biased school system will not be resolved by appointing a new administrator in Mok's place. A new face will do nothing to change an underfunded, understaffed, overcrowded school swarming with racist cops. The prerequisite to achieving education for the masses is the revolutionary transformation of society brought about by the destruction of the capitalist order and the creation of a workers America.

Jeff Paterson/Not In Our Name photos



Oakland High School students protest campus repression on June 6.

This most recent incident at Oakland High, just as with the April 7 police rampage against protesters at the Port of Oakland, showcases the escalating state crackdown on those who don't march in step with U.S. imperialism's drive for total world domination. Bush's bigoted anti-immigrant top cop, John Ashcroft, has stated that the Patriot Act has too many weak spots and needs strengthening; in other words, the "war on terror" is not repressive enough! But don't be fooled into thinking that the Democrats are friends of the exploited and oppressed. De facto Democrat, "Independent" Oakland mayor Jerry Brown supported the police blitzkrieg on the docks and is mum on the Secret Service terrorizing OHS students. The Democrats have supported Bush's "war on terror," which is really a thinly veiled way of waging war on immigrants, blacks, leftists and labor. To its credit, the teachers union, the Oakland Education Association, has issued a statement condemning the Secret Service's interrogation of the two students.

While teachers are being laid off in the thousands and schools crumble, police repression in the schools is on the rise. The SYC stands in solidarity with Oakland High students against this outrageous cop intimidation. We say: ***All cops out of the schools! For free, quality, integrated public education for all!*** ■

New Charges Filed Against Antiwar Activists

Hands Off Oakland Port Protesters!

OAKLAND, June 28—Misdemeanor charges were filed this week against 25 antiwar protesters arrested at the Port of Oakland on April 7 during a brutal cop attack in which police used so-called "less lethal" weapons that left over 50 people injured. Most of the protesters were charged with "interfering with a business"; some were also hit with "disturbing the peace" and "failure to disperse." International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) business agent Jack Heyman was further charged with "failure to comply with the order of a police officer" for trying to protect his union members who were attempting to report to work.

In the run-up to and during the first days of the war, police arrested thousands of protesters in the Bay Area in the hope of quelling the substantial opposition to the U.S. war on Iraq here at home. Charges against the 2,300 arrested in San Francisco were initially reduced from misdemeanors to traffic infractions. On June 20, following a traffic commissioner's threatened dismissal of the cases, District Attorney Terence Hallinan filed new charges against 350 of those originally arrested and announced that he'd soon charge the rest. The purely vindictive nature of these prosecutions was underscored when the charges were dropped yesterday because the police confessed, according to Assistant D.A. Mike Menesini, that "they are unable to establish the facts necessary to convict any of these individuals" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 June)!

In Oakland, charges against the port protesters had been put on hold on May 7 but not dismissed—an obvious intimidation tactic. The filing of charges now, coming at a time marked by stepped-up Iraqi resistance to the occupation of their country and the murderous response by American armed forces, is intended to stifle possible protest as the depredations of U.S. imperialism in Iraq are increasingly revealed for what they are: a bloody war of colonial conquest. We demand: Drop the charges against all antiwar protesters now!

It is perhaps not coincidental that the charges were filed just days before attorneys announced a class-action lawsuit against the City of Oakland and the police department. The case is being brought by 40 of those injured at the port, including nine longshoremen, and ILWU Local 10. The complaint lays out the malicious and wanton actions by the police and details the injuries suffered by each defendant. At a June 26 press conference called to announce the suit, three of the plaintiffs described what happened to them at the docks; one, Willow Rosenthal, said the wound to her calf caused by a wooden projectile necessitated a ten-day hospital stay and multiple surgeries. The civil suit asks for monetary damages and for an injunction to restrain the police from use of "excessive, indiscriminate and/or arbitrary force" against future demonstrations.

The Spartacist League stands in solidarity with those who have brought this suit, but we warn against illusions that it can result in police reform. The cops are the armed fist of the state, which exists to administer and protect the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Like the investigation into the April 7 events by an "independent" panel—set up by the same government that runs the police force—schemes for civilian oversight are only put in place to make the cops appear more credible, sometimes by sacrificing a cop or two as "aberrations" or agreeing to toothless consent decrees. The settlement in the Oakland "Riders" suit against police brutality is a case in point: the 72-page agreement specifying "the best available practices and procedures for police management" was signed not three months before the April 7 action at the port, showing that the police regard it as nothing more than scrap paper. A statement by John Burris, one of the attorneys involved in both the Riders and the Oakland port lawsuits, was revealing. In a 26 June ACLU press release, he is quoted as saying that the class-action suit is an "opportunity

continued on page 13

Australian Imperialism Hands Off!

Aceh: Indonesian Troops Out Now!

The following is reprinted from Australasian Spartacist *No. 183 (Winter 2003), newspaper of the Spartacist League of Australia.*

MAY 24—Under orders of President Megawati Sukarnoputri, the Indonesian military (TNI) have launched a massive operation against separatists in the Suma-

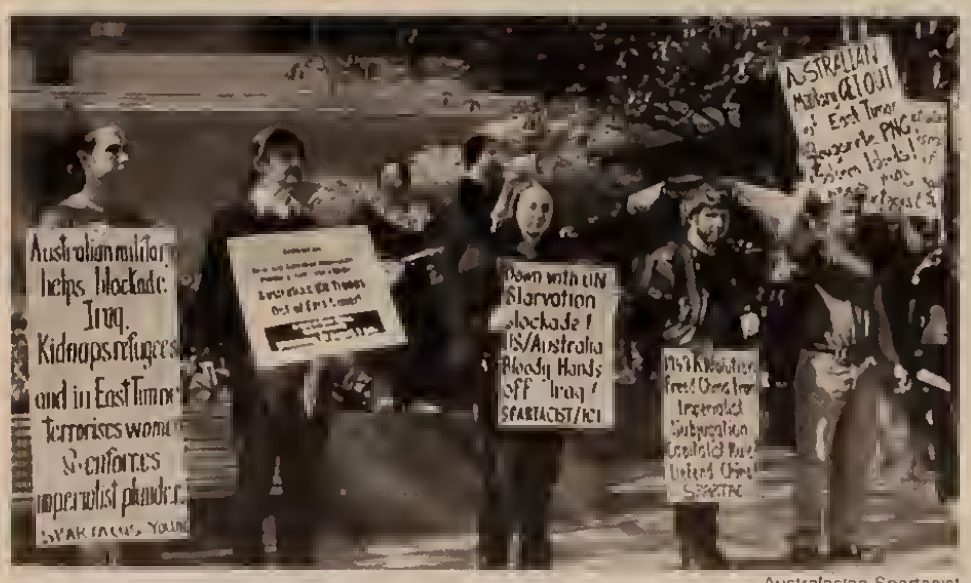
Australasian SPARTACIST

tran province of Aceh. In Indonesia's largest military operation since the 1975 invasion of East Timor, more than 45,000 Indonesian troops are on an offensive in Aceh and outlying islands against the Islamic separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM). The Indonesian offensive in Aceh follows the failure of "peace" talks in Tokyo between the central government and GAM, aborted when five GAM leaders were provocatively arrested and denied participation in the talks. In a chilling expression of TNI intent, General Endriartono Sutarto urged his officers to "hunt them down and exterminate them" (*Australian*, 21 May).

For more than a century, the Acehnese have fought tenaciously against both Dutch and Indonesian attempts to impose outside rule. News out of Aceh indicates a vicious campaign of terror against the Acehnese population. Scores have been killed, including children, and some 287 schools have been torched. The Indonesian government is preparing to round up 200,000 people and put them into tented camps guarded by soldiers. A similar technique was used by the British in Malaya in the 1950s to deny guerrilla forces access to food and information.

Suara Merdeka

Indonesian troops torment alleged GAM guerrilla fighter arrested in East Aceh.



Australasian Spartacist

Sydney University, August 2002: Spartacist-initiated protest demands Australian/UN troops out of East Timor.

Military Terror Aids Imperialist Stability, Exploitation

Of great import to the imperialist powers, Aceh is at the western point of the strategically important Strait of Malacca, through which most of Japan's oil and gas imports and much of Australia's trade are transported. With one of the world's largest oil and gas and substantial timber and gold reserves, Aceh is a place of brutal imperialist superexploitation. While the blood-soaked Indonesian capitalists, corrupt governmental bodies and TNI get their cut of fabulous profits, the imperialist conglomerates such as Exxon-Mobil take the lion's share, raping and plundering the resources under protection of the imperialist-funded Indonesian military who act to suppress any opposition.

The Indonesian military are currently using U.S.-supplied weaponry and combat aircraft such as C-130 Hercules transport planes and rocket-equipped OV-10 Broncos counter-insurgency aircraft against Acehnese villagers. Meanwhile the Australian government continues to fund "peacekeeping" operations in the province and has begun rebuilding links with Indonesia's military under the guise of combating "terrorism." These efforts include military cooperation with the Indonesian army to work with Kopassus Special Forces, notorious for torture and killing in Aceh and throughout the archipelago. ***All Indonesian troops out of Aceh now! Australian imperialism bloody hands off!***

In ordering the military assault in Aceh, the Javanese-chauvinist Megawati declared with cold equanimity, "Indonesia will not lose anything if we lose some of them. It is better to protect 220 million other Indonesians." Facing presidential elections next year, her whipping up of crude nationalism against the Acehnese also serves to deflect seething anger among the masses away from her government as it oversees vicious blood-sucking IMF-imposed austerity.

The Australian imperialists are particularly keen to see the separatist movement in Aceh quelled as they worry that the breakup of Indonesia could lead to the separation of West Papua and instability in their deeply oppressed Papua New Guinea (PNG) neocolony, itself chafing under IMF-imposed debt bondage. Particularly concerned about Indonesia, reportedly the U.S. is now seeking to station Marines and F-16 fighter jets in bases in Australia's Northern Territory. Alongside the U.S., the Australian rulers are furiously acting to enforce capitalist rule throughout East Asia to ensure the smooth flow of profits from their superexploited neocolonies.

Moreover the U.S. and Australian rulers see "stability" of the capitalist order in Indonesia as key to their goal of encircling China. With U.S. bases in Afghanistan and Central Asia, the intended entrenchment in the Philippines and existing bases in Japan and South Korea, an American presence in Indonesia would lock the chain around China. The imperialists seek the overturn of the social gains of the 1949 anti-capitalist revolution in China through a combination of military pressure and capitalist economic penetration. For unconditional military defence of the Chinese, North Korean, Cuban and Vietnamese deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution!

Indonesia is a dependent neocolony of the imperialists. For years the Javanese-chauvinist bourgeoisie has ruled over this prison house of peoples through bloody military terror. Following sometimes huge demonstrations supporting separation of Aceh and continual unrest in West Papua, in 2001 the Indonesian regime—following suggestions from the Australian and U.S. imperialist overlords—offered "autonomy" deals within the confines of a unitary Indonesian state. These were rejected by the Acehnese separatists. Since 1976, more than twelve thousand people have been killed and tens of thousands disappeared. At the height of the butcher Suharto's crackdown—between 1989 and 1992—at least 2,000 Acehnese were killed and many were tortured, raped and abducted by the Indonesian army. Mobil Oil's role in these atrocities is well-documented. According to survivors of a death camp and other investigators, Mobil supplied the Indonesian army with heavy earth-moving equipment to dig mass graves (see "Mobil Oil and the Indonesian Death Camp," *WV* No. 705, 22 January 1999).

For a Trotskyist Party in Indonesia

Their victory in the war against Iraq has emboldened the imperialists for more brutal subjugation against other semi-colonial and colonial countries and encourages their servile bourgeois allies in these countries to carry out more despotic terror. With the U.S. imperialists backing a murderous military campaign by the Arroyo regime in the south of the Philippines against the Moro Muslim minority, Megawati has been depicting the GAM as similar to Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah, whose members are currently on trial over the indefensible acts of terror bombing in Bali last October. As an article in the *Australian Financial Review* (20 May) stated, "Indonesia is unlikely to be criticised by major powers such as the United States for attempting to crack down on an Islamic separatist group in the current global climate."

In Indonesia and other countries of belated capitalist development strangled by imperialism, religious fundamentalism as a mass movement has spread in the absence of revolutionary leadership and as an illusory means to relieve the poverty and immiseration of the masses. In Indonesia, religious fundamentalism and nationalism are often intertwined and act to particularly target women and the largely Christian Chinese minority. While we stand firmly in defence of the Acehnese against the chauvinism of the Javanese rulers, we equally fight the reactionary designs of the Muslim GAM and the religious leaders who stand behind them. The anti-woman Islamic fundamentalist forces, feeding off the frustration and anger at military atrocities and the desperate conditions of capitalist rule, already impose their reactionary writ on the streets of Aceh. Women have been forced into strict Islamic dress codes and alleged prostitutes and petty thieves humiliated and paraded through the streets of the capital. Meanwhile some pro-independence forces have called themselves "Taliban" after the savage anti-woman fanatics in Afghanistan.

Brought together in huge modern industries, it is workers who uniquely possess the class interest to overcome the communal, national, religious and other divisions which are manipulated by the capitalists to "divide and rule." A revolutionary Trotskyist party in Indonesia, in fighting for proletarian unity, would champion the struggles of all the

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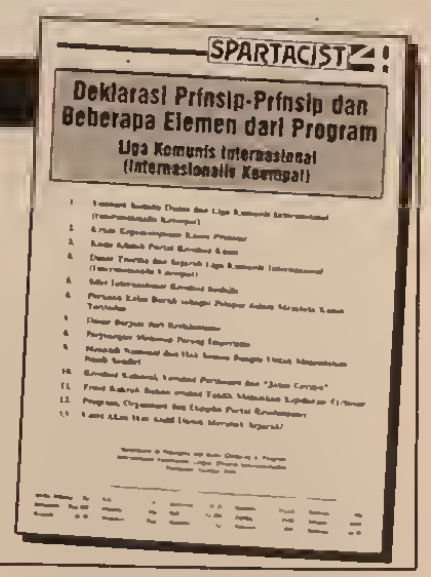
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Liga Komunis Internasional (Internasionalis Keempat)

oppressed, including the minority peoples of Aceh and West Papua. Such a party would be based on the program of permanent revolution which teaches that in dependent countries like Indonesia, where all wings of the local capitalist rulers are bound together with their imperialist masters, only the revolutionary dictatorship of the workers, leaning on the poor peasantry, can satisfy the most basic needs of the masses: freedom from imperialist subjugation, liberation for the myriad oppressed minority peoples, social equality for women and alleviation of the terrible poverty of the hungry masses. If it is not to be strangled by backwardness or imperialist intervention, this struggle for proletarian revolution in Indonesia must be linked to the fight for workers rule in Japan and Australia and the advanced capitalist countries in Europe and North America.

Such an understanding is anathema to the reformists and centrists of the Socialist Alliance, which includes the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and Workers Power (WP). Socialist Alliance endorsed the call by Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) front group Action in Solidarity with Asia and the Pacific, for the Australian government to "initiate a special humanitarian assistance program directed to the people of Aceh." The Australian bourgeoisie, which at home brutally oppresses the indigenous Aboriginal population and carries out racist scapegoating of Asian immigrants, is not about to provide "humanitarian assistance" to the people of Aceh. In 1965, Australia and the U.S. "aided" the Indonesian rulers in their anti-Communist slaughter of up to one million workers and peasants that brought the military dictator Suharto to power. For the next 30 years, Australian Liberal/National Coalition and Labor governments backed Suharto's brutal military rule, including the 1975 invasion of East Timor. Now the Australian capitalist rulers have a military occupation force in East Timor to guard the profit-gouging of White Australian imperialism in East Timor and beyond.

East Timor, the "Left" and Big Lies

The call by fake-left groups for imperialist "assistance" to Aceh is but a stepping-stone for open appeals for Australian military intervention. The program of reformist left groups is based on seeking to pressure "democratic" imperialism to play a progressive role. Indeed in September 1999 the fake-socialist groups from the DSP to the ISO, Socialist Alternative (SA), the Taaffeite Socialist Party (SP) and WP all marched in lockstep with the Labor Party in demonstrations that screamed for Australian imperialist troops to go to East Timor and "save" the Timorese from brutal Indonesian-backed forces. The Australian/UN occupation of East Timor has meant racist state terror, the massacre of unarmed high school student protesters last December, an unemployment rate of up to 90 percent in urban areas and open imperialist theft. The racist Australian bully-boys used the buildup to the attack on Iraq to strong-arm leaders of their East Timorese neo-colony into signing away some ***U.S.$30 billion*** in royalties from East Timor's seabed gas and oil fields. As we have from the very start, we stand forthrightly opposed to the Australian-led colonial occupation of East Timor. ***Australian troops/cops out of East Timor, PNG and Solomon Islands!***

As the reality of the occupation of East Timor becomes increasingly apparent, the centrist and reformist left have been trying to rewrite their sordid history of support for the Australian imperialist invasion. A prime example is the SP, who now claim that "almost alone at the time, the Socialist Party opposed the Australian intervention and warned that East Timor would eventually pay a price for it" (*The Socialist*, March/April). In fact in 1999 the SP, then called the Militant Socialist Organisation, repeatedly hailed the chauvinist rallies calling for Australian and UN troops to East Timor as the "magnificent response of the Australian people." They even claimed, "If it wasn't for the pressure of the Australian people, Canberra and 'our' armed forces would be once again putting the 'national interest' (i.e. protecting the interests of Australian bosses in Indonesia) before the massacres of the people of East Timor" (*Militant*, October 1999). According to these reformists, Australian imperialism was really acting against itself—by invading East Timor!

For their part, the centrist WP not only lie about their own actions in 1999 but go out of their way to cover for the reformists. In an 8 May statement WP says "the socialist left in Australia, took very different roads" over East Timor:

> "One side supporting the occupation of East Timor by the Australian imperialist military, the other opposing their occupation of this land.... One side including the DSP, ALP and the Greens; the other the ISO, Socialist Alternative, Workers Power, FSP and others."

This is rubbish. While Socialist Alternative made mealy-mouthed noises like "peacekeepers are not the answer" and WP, in words, even called for Australian troops out, the fact is that these groups along with the ISO and SP not only marched in the "Troops In Now" demonstrations but they wildly hailed them. They also cheered the racist pro-imperialist bans on Indonesia enacted by the Laborite trade-union misleaders and designed *solely* and *explicitly* to speed up the entry of Australian troops. The Laborite trade-union bureaucracy's and fake left's support for "Troops In Now" rallies over East Timor aided the Australian imperialists, garnering support for the murderous military that has since gone to Afghanistan and Iraq.

Unlike our reformist and centrist opponents who capitulate to bourgeois nationalism and promote the lie that the capitalist rulers can somehow act on behalf of the oppressed, we seek to build a revolutionary internationalist proletarian party which stands in implacable opposition to capitalist class rule and chauvinist poison. Solidarity with the toiling masses of the region, not least in Indonesia, means class-struggle opposition to racist Australian imperialism. As part of our struggle for a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia, we stand in revolutionary opposition to the Australian capitalist rulers and every attempt by them to impose racist imperialist domination throughout the region. ■

SARS...

(continued from page 7)

right-wing mouthpiece for the U.S. financiers, was compelled to note the dire consequences of "free market" health care in China. The *Journal* notes that in the early years after the Revolution, "China nearly accomplished the utopian goal of full medical coverage in the countryside. In 1975, about 85% of rural residents had community-financed health care, under a commune system. Today, about 10% do." The article continues:

> "Today, China has the second-highest number of people in the world suffering from tuberculosis, after India, with the disease killing 130,000 Chinese every year. In addition, China has an estimated 1.5 million people with HIV/AIDS. Last year, the United Nations predicted the number of such cases in China would climb to 10 million by 2010."

The condemnations of China's handling of SARS by the capitalist press are rank hypocrisy. This catastrophe is driven by the very "free market reforms" they have cried out for. Their concerns are not for Chinese people, but for the danger SARS poses to the supply of extremely cheap, well-educated labor on whose exploitation their investments depend. Truly, as Karl Marx said of the capitalist, "his soul is the soul of capital."

The imperialists are bent on re-enslaving China and reducing it again to semi-colonial subjugation. The unprecedented economic and social collapse in the ex-Soviet Union following capitalist restoration gives a measure of the stakes in China today. Fully 75 percent of the population in Russia and the other former Soviet states lives below or barely above subsistence level. Fifteen million are actually starving. Life expectancy has fallen to *57 years* for men, below what it was a century ago. Malnutrition is the norm among schoolchildren and diseases like TB are rampant as a country that was once a major industrial power has been turned into a pauperized wasteland.

Just as we fought to the end against counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, today we Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defense of the gains of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. It is the urgent task of the Chinese proletariat to sweep away through political revolution the Stalinist bureaucracy which has gravely undermined the system of nationalized property that resulted from the 1949 Revolution.

Expropriate the Capitalist Rulers Through Socialist Revolution!

The Canadian ruling class responded to SARS about as badly as they possibly could, but they did respond. When the capitalists want to do something about an illness, especially if they think *their* class might be at risk, they do act. In the early days of the AIDS epidemic, the rulers of North America saw it as a disease of blacks and gays and therefore simply didn't give a damn. Then they discovered otherwise, and more money was spent on research and treatment. But even the drugs available to treat the disease today are very expensive—which means they are not made available to the masses of black Africa, where AIDS is killing millions. Under capitalism, medicine like everything else is ultimately run on the basis of profit.

There is an irrational component to this as well. The capitalist rulers, especially in the U.S., have long waged a "war on drugs" as a pretext to beef up police powers against minorities and the poor. So they block perfectly rational public health measures like needle exchange programs, which could significantly reduce the spread of AIDS among HIV users. We also note with bitterness that an entirely preventable and curable disease, TB, has been allowed to become epidemic in Native communities and in the homeless shelters in Toronto.

In the mid-1990s there were huge protests and one-day strikes against the Ontario Tories' vicious destruction of social services and jobs. Hundreds of thousands of workers hit the streets repeatedly, aiming to beat back the bosses' frontal assault on the working people. But these struggles were channeled into backing the same NDP that had already delivered its own blows against the working class. Now, as the ruling Tories ready for elections, they are planning another installment in their side of the class struggle, opening the door to private medical facilities, making all teachers' job actions illegal, while handing piles of financial goodies to their friends.

The NDP, whose antiwar posturing has helped to refurbish its tattered credentials, is gearing up to corral workers into the dead-end of parliamentary politics, which can achieve nothing of lasting significance for the proletariat. The New Democrats have a working-class base but their politics and program are thoroughly bourgeois, and in power they are driven by the same imperatives as the parties of capital. There is plenty of anger at the Tories' gutting of social services. But an NDP government would only mean a knife in the back, as opposed to the more frontal attacks of the open bosses' parties.

A hundred years ago SARS would not have moved so far and so fast. But air travel ensured its rapid spread outside of China. With its technological development, capitalism has knit all of the globe together by creating a world market. Yet this system, based on competition and production for profit, produces war, poverty and massive inequality, especially in the countries subjugated by imperialism. Even eminently practicable public health measures such as vaccines and clean water are unavailable to hundreds of millions.

An international planned economy would take immediate steps to direct the necessary resources to areas affected by dangerous viruses like SARS, not to mention AIDS, which is killing tens of millions. Free, quality health care for all is within the bounds of material possibility, but not under capitalism, where the availability and quality of health care for the masses of working people is subordinate to the drive for profit. Even now, with no treatment for SARS in sight, there is an obscene scramble to patent the virus. At the same time, the big drug companies are not rushing to invest in SARS research because the small numbers affected thus far do not make it profitable.

Leon Trotsky, with V.I. Lenin leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, noted how:

> "...world capitalism has drunk its progressive mission to the last drop. The development of the productive powers comes to rest against two reactionary barriers: private ownership of the means of production and the frontiers of the national state. Unless these two barriers are swept away, that is to say, unless the means of production are concentrated in the hands of the community, and unless there is an organized planned economy which can gradually enfold the whole world, the economic and cultural collapse of mankind is foredoomed."
>
> —January 1935 introduction to *Terrorism and Communism*

Out of the coming political struggles, the goal of we revolutionary Marxists of the Trotskyist League is to organize the growing social anger against the capitalists' incessant attacks into a revolutionary struggle to overthrow this entire system of exploitation. Poverty, homelessness and starvation will be eradicated from the earth and the modern gains of science put fully at the service of humanity when world socialist revolution sweeps away capitalist rule. ■

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LBI...

(continued from page 5)

through a "Jewish state" can this people find salvation. Against this, Abram Leon wrote:

> "The conditions of the decline of capitalism which have posed so sharply the Jewish question make its solution equally impossible along the Zionist road. And there is nothing astonishing in that. An evil cannot be suppressed without destroying its causes. But Zionism wishes to resolve the Jewish question without destroying capitalism, which is the principal source of the suffering of the Jews."

The LBI stands for "the right to constitute a Palestinian state over all its original territory, a demand abandoned by the PLO via the agreements with imperialism. But we make it clear that only the Palestinian and Arab working masses will be able to resolve the democratic demands of their people in the face of imperialist oppression and Zionism, by means of a struggle that is anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist in nature" (*JLO*, November-December 2000). Similarly, they occasionally call for a "soviet Palestinian fatherland" including the territory that presently constitutes Israel. This perspective denies the Hebrew-speaking people the right to self-determination. Normally, the right of self-determination of an oppressor nation is not in question. But in this case of geographically interpenetrated peoples, the only solution to the national question lies in the revolutionary destruction of the Israeli garrison-state from within through workers revolution. We cannot project the particular national configuration that would best express the democratic aspirations of both peoples under the conditions of proletarian power in the region. This might take the form of a bi-national workers state or two or more workers states. But the LBI's talk about a "soviet" Palestine cannot be taken seriously. The LBI and its cronies call for "the victory of the Arab guerrillas (Hezbollah, Hamas)" (*El Bolchevique* No. 1, March 2001, newspaper of the Organización Comunista Internacionalista, the LBI's Argentine satellite). This would mean the formation of a *theocratic* Palestinian state, forged over the corpses of Israeli workers and Palestinian women and communists alike.

Indeed, the LBI seems to want to become some sort of "left" adviser to reactionary Islamic cutthroats. Thus, while hailing the Taliban as "anti-imperialist militants"(!) (*JLO*, March 2002), the LBI ludicrously holds that "The absence of political and programmatic homogeneity inside the Taliban is leading it to a humiliating defeat, without struggle or resistance, systematically capitulating to the pressures of the Pakistani bourgeoisie, a puppet of Yankee and European imperialism" (*Marxismo Revolucionário*, December 2001). The LBI wants to pressure the Taliban to adopt a "revolutionary" program! The Taliban are not leftist guerrillas like the Nicaraguan Sandinistas with illusions in a Menshevik scheme of a "democratic" revolution, but a very politically homogenous militia of ***rabidly anti-communist, woman-hating Islamic reactionaries***, originally financed and trained by the CIA and forged in their struggle against every elementary right of women and against the Soviet Red Army!

photos YIVO Institute

Polish and Russian Social Democrats and Bundists honor victims of October 1905 pogrom in Vilna, Poland (above). Trotsky seated (center) with young Red Army men and women, 1924. Significant number of early Soviet military cadre were Jewish.

The LBI also asserts that sympathy toward fundamentalist groups in Palestine such as Hamas "reflects, in a deformed way, the growing revolutionary tendency among the Palestinians" (*JLO*, September-October 2001). This is ridiculous. Under the continuous genocidal Zionist state offensive, the growth of religious groups like Hamas reflects the growing *desperation* of the Palestinian masses before the dead end of Arafat's PLO's petty-bourgeois nationalism.

Hamas is a wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, a clerical-fascist movement founded in Egypt in 1928. The Brotherhood extended to the Gaza Strip, under Israeli occupation since 1967. In 1986, the Israeli military governor of Gaza, General Segev, openly admitted that Israel funneled support to the Brotherhood "in order to help create a force that would stand against the leftist forces which support the PLO" (quoted in Graham Usher, "What Kind of Nation? The Rise of Hamas in the Occupied Territories," *Race & Class*, October-December 1995). Fearing a loss of influence after the *Intifada* broke out in December 1987, the Brotherhood announced the formation of Hamas as its "national liberation" movement. While thousands of members of secular Palestinian organizations were arrested, Hamas was allowed to function openly, with its spokesmen appearing on Israeli TV. Hamas was banned only when they started to attack Israeli soldiers, nearly two years into the *Intifada*. Even then, Hamas' main activity "was less a national struggle than a vicious social offensive against all manifestations of 'un-Islamic behaviour,' especially in Gaza where women were forced to wear the headscarf" (ibid.).

The hypocritical LBI calls for an "internationalist revolutionary party of the Palestinian, Arab and Jewish proletariat" (*JLO*, September-October 2001). But they also assert that the attacks by the fundamentalist terrorists of Hamas, mostly targeting civilians, "constitute a legitimate military response of the oppressed peoples and their organizations to the state terrorism carried out by Israel" (*JLO*, April 2002). The LBI is for an "internationalist" party in which the murder of its Israeli members by Islamic fundamentalists would be "legitimized" beforehand! The attacks on Israel's garrisons and military bases, as well as on its heavily armed settler auxiliaries, are directed against the military forces of the oppressive Zionist occupation. In contrast, the suicide bombings against Israeli civilians in shopping malls and discotheques are criminal from the standpoint of the proletariat. This indiscriminate terror, which regards all Jews as enemies, echoes the anti-Arab chauvinism of the far more murderous Zionist rulers and serves to drive the Hebrew workers into the arms of their exploiters.

While the Palestinian attacks on the Israeli army have helped fuel the sentiment for a withdrawal (as in the case of the "refuseniks"), the Palestinians cannot prevail in a military conflict with the Zionist war machine. The armed struggle of Palestinian nationalists is aimed at putting pressure on the imperialists and the Arab bourgeoisies. And the LBI is not alien to this perspective: "It is necessary to go from words to action and build brigades of armed struggle in defense of the Palestinian Intifada, demanding arms from the Arab governments to confront the Zionist genocidal offensive" (*JLO*, April 2002).

This is a suicidal reformist strategy. From the 1970 Black September massacre of some 10,000 Palestinians by the Jordanian monarchy to the expulsion of 200,000 Palestinians from the Kuwaiti emirate in 1991, the Arab rulers—from whom the LBI demands arms—are deadly enemies of the Palestinians, responsible for the massacre of some *50,000* Palestinians between 1967 and 1977! Marxists seek to shift the axis of struggle from Jew against Arab to class against class. We have no illusion that a deep rupture in the chauvinist consensus presently tying the Hebrew proletariat to its capitalist exploiters will be easy to achieve. To reach this goal, in all likelihood great historical events will be necessary, such as a victorious workers revolution in one of the Arab countries. And the politics of the LBI are an *obstacle* to this perspective.

Only anti-Semites write off the entire Hebrew-speaking people as inherently reactionary, and that is what the LBI does in deeds. In "Sweep the ICL...," the LBI also spews its venom at the Internationalist Group—a handful of renegades from Trotskyism bound together solely by their hatred of the Spartacists—for having defended Israeli army reservists who in January of last year refused to serve in the Occupied Territories. The defiant statement of the so-called "refuseniks," signed by hundreds of reservists, rocked the Zionist garrison, arguing that "We shall not continue to fight beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve and humiliate an entire people." But the disgusting LBI referred to these reservists as "murderous Zionist rats." In February of the same year, 14,000 people marched in Tel Aviv to demand: "Get out of the territories, get back to negotiations!" As we explained in March last year, the fissures in the Zionist bunker pose opportunities for revolutionaries to drive a wedge between the Hebrew-speaking proletariat and its chauvinist exploiters. But this would make no sense to anti-Semites.

In July 1996, half a million Israeli workers carried out a ten-hour general strike—the first one in 20 years—against Likud's attacks on social programs and its plans to privatize nationalized industry. The LBI rejected this strike as reactionary, saying that "the Zionist state is infested not with workers who sell their labor power, but by members of the various cliques into which Zionism is divided" (*JLO*, June 1998). In a different article in the same paper, the LBI tries to mask its anti-Semitism by saying that not all Israeli workers are simply members of Zionist cliques, only to uphold their condemnation of the strike because "a great portion" of these workers "beyond their work relations, assume an open role as political militants in defense of Zionism"! Truly revolting. In the face of these arguments, one can only assume that the anti-Semitic garbage of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* has replaced *The Communist Manifesto* in the LBI's library. ■

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Palestinians...

(continued from page 16)

Today these extreme positions are common not only in the Zionist ruling establishment but also in sections of the American ruling establishment, as indicated by the fact that the *New York Times* (18 May) recently published a major article on the growing support for "transfer" in Washington. These views are exemplified by the unholy alliance of Christian evangelicals and Zionist neocons like Pentagon heavies Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle. Perle and Wolfowitz served as advisers to Sharon predecessor Benjamin Netanyahu in the 1996 Israeli elections, where they urged him to abandon Oslo and wage war on the Palestinians. House majority leader Tom DeLay, an evangelical Christian, refers to the West Bank as Judea and Samaria.

As the *Times* article points out, the Christian evangelical base of the Bush administration today espouses the genocidal line that "Jordan is Palestine"—i.e., the expulsion of all Palestinians from Israel and the Occupied Territories. The demented mindset of these messianic fanatics is captured by the following statements by Bush and Sharon cabinet minister Benyamin Elon. According to Ahhas, Bush declaimed at Aqaba: "God told me to strike at al Qaida and I struck them, and then he instructed me to strike at Saddam, which I did, and now I am determined to solve the problem in the Middle East. If you help me I will act, and if not, the elections will come and I will have to focus on them" (*Ha'aretz*, 24 June). Elon rants: "The Christians with the leadership of Bush, and the Jews with the existence of the state of Israel, have a window of opportunity to make clear to the Islamic world that we have power, and we are here." The *Times* article reported that when Elon addressed the Christian Coalition in the U.S., "he was cheered by thousands of evangelical Christians waving Israeli flags when he called for the 'relocation' of Palestinians to Jordan."

The epithet "self-hater" that the Zionists ritually hurl at anti-Zionist Jews truly applies to the Zionists; in their pursuit of Israeli expansionism they embrace the worst enemies of the Jewish people. Speaking of Elon, the *Times* wrote, "The Bible, he says, is where Christians and Jews meet; their debate begins only with the New Testament"—never mind that Elon's "New Testament allies" accuse the Jews of crucifying Jesus! In fact, the Christian fundamentalists support Jewish control of Israel only because in their mythology it will usher in the "second coming" of Christ—after which the Jews (and other infidels) are to be consigned to hell!

AFP

Jenin, West Bank, May 27.

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

The sense of frustration and despair over the prospects for Palestinian national liberation among many who solidarize with the Palestinian cause was evident at an international conference of Al-Awda (the Palestine Right to Return Coalition) in Toronto over the June 20-22 weekend. A number of participants were with the International Solidarity Movement, whose activists have courageously put their lives on the line in standing alongside besieged Palestinians against Israeli troops and settlers in the Occupied Territories. A *WV* reporter at the conference observed of many of the participants: "They think the PLO has thoroughly betrayed the Palestinian cause by abandoning the right of return for refugees and accepting the existence of an exclusionist Zionist state. They also despair at the rise of fundamentalist forces like Hamas and Islamic Jihad and at least formally oppose anti-Jewish racism."

There was widespread hostility at the conference toward the Arab bourgeois regimes. A conference session was devoted to the conditions of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, while the conference call posted on Al-Awda's Web site also addressed the treatment of Palestinians in U.S.-occupied Iraq: "Thousands of Palestinians living in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities have been abused and evicted from their homes and apartments by forces supported and financed by the occupiers. Meanwhile, a group of Lebanese officials are spearheading an attempt to strip thousands of naturalized Palestinian refugees of their Lebanese citizenship, thereby depriving them of basic civil and social rights."

Various speakers in the plenary session on "PLO: Past, Present and Future" tried to identify the moment at which the PLO went wrong. One speaker pointed to the 1993 Oslo accords as the PLO's key betrayal. Another went back further, focusing on the PLO's acceptance of the idea of a Palestinian "mini-state" in the 1970s. Yet another concentrated on 1970, when the PLO refused to fight to overthrow the regime of Jordan's King Hussein, who slaughtered more than 10,000 PLO fighters in the infamous "Black September" massacre: "Holding talks with King Hussein as an 'Arab brother' was a betrayal of all we stood for.... Israel was not the only one to use phosphorous bombs against us, King Hussein did as well."

(As an expression of disgust at the current PLO leadership, one speaker retailed the following joke: There's a bathhouse that charges clients depending on how much soap they will need. Sharon comes up and asks, "How much?" "100 shekels," replies the attendant. "You are quite big and I'm not even sure we have enough soap." Then Abu Mazen comes up and asks for soap. "For you, 200 shekels," says the attendant. "What? Sharon only paid 100 shekels and he is way fatter than me," says Abu Mazen. The attendant replies: "Yes, but you are much filthier.")

One speaker at the session on the PLO said, "When you stop representing your people and your national liberation program, then there is not much left of the PLO." But the petty-bourgeois nationalist program of the PLO, even in the left-wing variants espoused by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), never represented the aspirations of the Palestinian masses but rather those of the would-be Palestinian bourgeoisie. In 1970, DFLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh declared: "We intend to build a democratic and socialist state where Israelis and Arabs will enjoy the same rights; a state where there will be no form of oppression; a state, finally, where the power, and all the power, will be exercised by workers' and peasants' soviets" (Pathfinder Press, *Documents of the Palestinian Resistance Movement*, 1971). But despite such leftist rhetoric, in practice the DFLP remained wedded to the perspective of Arab nationalism and never broke from the more mainstream nationalists represented by Arafat's Fatah. Even after denouncing the Oslo accords, the DFLP (as well as the PFLP) made their peace with the Palestinian Authority and remained within the PLO.

Like all nationalism, Arab nationalism preaches the unity of the downtrodden and exploited with their "own" exploiters and would-be exploiters. In this view, the allies of the Palestinian people in their struggle for liberation are to be sought not among the proletariat of the region—including the Hebrew-speaking working class in Israel—but rather among the Arab rulers. Even the most militant Palestinian nationalists recognized that they did not have the power to defeat the Zionist state militarily. Rather, the strategy of "armed struggle" pursued by the PLO in the 1960s and '70s was aimed at pressuring the Arab regimes to take up the cause of "Arab unity" against Israel. That is why the PLO pledged "non-interference" in the Arab states, including Jordan, which was majority Palestinian and where the PLO had its main base.

This eventually was supplanted by direct appeals to the imperialists, centrally U.S. imperialism, particularly following the destruction of the USSR. With the counterrevolutionary collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the PLO was deprived of crucial diplomatic and financial support, paving the way for the ignominious U.S.-sponsored Oslo "peace" accords establishing the PLO as the Zionists' police auxiliaries in the Occupied Territories.

It is this betrayal which paved the way for the rise of Islamic fundamentalists like Hamas and Islamic Jihad, vile anti-Semitic and anti-Christian religious bigots who seek to enslave women and extirpate any manifestations of social progress. At a workshop on Palestinian women, relegated to the end of the conference, one speaker contrasted the current condition of women in the Occupied Territories to that following the outbreak of the first *Intifada* in 1987, which spurred women into struggle and gave rise to a plethora of women's organizations which challenged traditional values. But, she noted, such hopes were dashed with the Oslo accords.

During the discussion, a comrade of the Trotskyist League of Canada laid out our perspective for a socialist federation of the Near East as the only road to liberate women, the Palestinian people and the oppressed masses throughout the region, stressing the need to crack the Zionist monolith along class lines. In reply, one of the panelists dismissed class struggle in Israel as a myth and asserted that all Israelis benefit from the oppression of the Palestinians.

The nationalist view of Israel as a seamless society of predatory colonialists was given the lie by the strike of 700,000 Israeli public sector workers this spring, protesting government cutbacks, that brought the country to a grinding halt for several days. The cutbacks are, in large part, the price of the huge funds expended to maintain the settlements and the military occupation. Thus, on a purely economic level (and only on that level), the strike was a challenge to Israel's intent to militarily suppress the Palestinians of the Occupied Territories.

While many speakers at the conference put forward the vision of a democratic and secular state where both Palestinians and Israeli Jews could live together, not a single speaker put forward a program of how to get there. The reason is simple. They reject the only *realistic* program for social and national liberation in the Near East: the mobilization of the proletariat on the basis of revolutionary internationalism to sweep away all the oppressive capitalist regimes in the region.

Breaking the Hebrew proletariat from Zionist chauvinism will be a difficult and arduous task, likely requiring the victory of socialist revolution in one of the other Near Eastern states. But if the Hebrew working class is to fight for its own liberation from capitalist exploitation, it must champion the national rights of the Palestinian people. In turn, the Arab working masses will not be won to a perspective of proletarian revolution if they are not broken from Arab nationalism and anti-Semitism. And that will not happen unless the Arab proletariat upholds the right of the Hebrew-speaking people—as well as the Kurds and other peoples—to a national existence.

The current grim situation underlines that there is no easy road to the liberation of the Palestinian people—including the right of refugees to return to their homeland—which will require the overthrow not only of the Zionist state but also of bourgeois rule in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. This perspective demands the forging of revolutionary Marxist parties tempered through the most uncompromising struggle not only against fundamentalist reaction but even the most secular or "progressive" brand of nationalism. There is no other way.■

Oakland...

(continued from page 9)

to enhance the quality of policing in this city." As communists, we're not in the business of making the capitalist police more effective but of mobilizing the social power of the working class to sweep away this system and the police brutality that comes along with it.

Continuing our work to defend all those arrested for their opposition to the U.S. imperialist rape of Iraq, the Partisan Defense Committee on June 25 sent a letter of protest to Alameda County D.A. Thomas Orloff, which we reprint below.

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee protests Monday's filing of criminal charges against 25 people—including ILWU business agent Jack Heyman—who were arrested during the April 7 antiwar protest at the Port of Oakland. At the port protest, riot-equipped police wearing gas masks opened fire with wooden bullets, pellet-firing "sting bag" and concussion grenades on picketers protesting the "war merchants at the Oakland docks." Dozens were injured, including nine longshoremen. This wanton and gratuitous police attack was entirely premeditated. It was coordinated and planned days in advance in collusion with the shipping companies, APL and Stevedoring Services of America, and with the assistance of the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC), who falsely label antiwar protest and union action "terrorist."

This brutal attack, now followed by the filing of these sham criminal charges, can only be intended to intimidate those who oppose the U.S. imperialist colonial war, and now occupation, in Iraq and to chill any dissent. The direct link between the war against Iraq and the war on labor in the U.S. was brought home with a vengeance in Oakland on April 7. Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union got a taste of the "security" that the Maritime Security Act was designed to enforce—keeping the ports working for capitalist profit and the imperialist military machine. We demand that all the charges against the 25 protesters be dropped immediately!■

Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

improve under the American occupation. The U.S.-imposed economic sanctions, carried out under the authority of the United Nations, would be lifted. America, the wealthiest country in the world, would quickly rebuild Iraq's devastated economy. Instead, conditions have gotten far worse.

The massive U.S. bombing, followed by widespread looting, has shattered the fragile economic infrastructure of Baghdad, Basra and the other cities. Factories, hospitals and schools have electric power intermittently if at all. The water supply is broken down. Sewage-treatment plants are not operating. Young children and the elderly especially are dying from drinking polluted water.

In every respect, what was once among the most modern and literate countries in the Near East has been thrown back decades. This is not the result simply of incompetence or overweening imperialist arrogance which, to be sure, Bush & Co. possess aplenty. While turning a blind eye to the looting of the country's cultural treasures, hospitals, universities and government offices, the occupation forces rushed to secure oil facilities and sift through bomb wreckage in a ghoulish and futile search for DNA evidence of Saddam Hussein's remains.

The widespread looting throughout Iraq is nothing compared to the organized looting the American imperialists have in mind for this oil-rich country.

AP

Demonstrators in Najaf protest closing of newspaper by American occupation regime.

Bush administration cronies like Halliburton and Bechtel have already been brought in to "rebuild" and take charge of the oil industry. In turn, oil pipelines and other facilities have increasingly become a target for sabotage by enraged Iraqis. Bremer has now declared that more than 40 government-owned companies will be privatized by fiat, leading to widespread closures and massive layoffs. The aim, explained the *New York Times* (23 June), is to turn "Iraq into a Middle East model of free trade and deregulation." In reversing the nationalizations that gave this country one of the highest standards of living in the Near East, the U.S. is about to roll Iraq back to the days before the overthrow of the British-backed monarchy in 1958.

Whatever opposition France, Germany and Russia expressed to the U.S./British invasion, they are now bending over backward to smooth over relations and get a small share of Iraq's oil wealth. The U.S., in turn, needs European money to help finance its occupation of Iraq (while depending on Germany in particular to police an increasingly rebellious Afghanistan). A day after the United Nations Security Council gave its imprimatur to the Anglo-American occupation, as Tariq

WV Photo

SL/SYC Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at massive antiwar demonstration in New York City, March 22.

Ali reported in the London *Guardian* (24 May), "Senior executives from more than 1,000 companies gathered in London to bask in the sunshine of the re-established consensus under the giant umbrella of Bechtel, the American empire's most favoured construction company. A tiny proportion of the loot will be shared."

In Iraq, the American occupation has encouraged the re-emergence of every reactionary force, from fundamentalists demanding an "Islamic republic" to monarchists to corrupt "democrats" on the CIA payroll. Liquor shops and cinemas are being shut down, while the Christian minority is being terrorized. In northern Iraq, Kurds and Arabs are carrying out pogromist attacks against each other. The motley collection of Kurdish nationalist warlords, Shi'ite clerics and Iraqi "oppositionists" assembled by Washington to support the U.S. invasion are just as viscerally hostile to one another as they were to Saddam Hussein. That is one reason why, in an attempt to keep Iraq together, Bush & Co. canceled any plans for an "interim government" and opted for a naked colonial occupation without the facade of Iraqi collaborators.

Reporting from Basra, *New York Times* (24 June) columnist Nicholas Kristof wrote: "An iron curtain of fundamentalism risks falling over Iraq, with particularly grievous implications for girls and women." Women who have always worn Western dress are now being forced into the Islamic headscarf and veil. Female students are being driven out of the universities. Fear of rape is now widespread. Even under the oppressive Ba'athist regime, women had the right to vote, choose their own husbands and maintain custody of their children after divorce and the right to equal inheritance with their brothers. In short, as the *Los Angeles Times* (26 May) captured it in an article headlined "Baghdad Women Shrouded in Fear": "In one of the most secular capitals in the Arab world, where women were until recently a visible and integrated part of public life, females have all but disappeared."

A Leninist-Trotskyist party would combine the struggle for national liberation against American imperialism with a social revolution to expropriate the Iraqi capitalists and landlords. Such a party would champion women's emancipation and Kurdish independence, striving to unite the working class and rural toilers across the national and ethnic/religious divisions which are now being exploited and aggravated by the American imperialist occupation.

All U.S./British Forces Out of Iraq!

Escalating imperialist terror has in turn provoked escalating and widespread resistance from a population which is widely armed. Even deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who crowed that the occupation of Iraq would be a "cakewalk," now speaks of a "guerrilla war" in the country. In recent weeks, barely a day has gone by without at least one or two American soldiers being killed in Iraqi attacks. When a 23-year-old woman in the village of Baquba died in a hail of bullets after throwing a grenade at U.S. troops, she became a heroine and a "role model" to the local population. On June 24, six British Royal Military Police were killed in the southern Shi'ite town of Majar al Kabir by an angry crowd after the troops fired at demonstrators protesting the invasions of their homes, killing five and wounding over a dozen. These were the first combat casualties suffered by the British since the war ended. (Most British casualties during the war were inflicted by their American allies in "friendly fire.")

A few months before the U.S. invasion, we noted:

> "In the current conflict, the U.S. is likely to win against Iraq rather easily. But occupation of that country, with its conflicting ethnic groupings and well-developed civil society, could spark massive resistance. And regardless of how bloody, brutal or barbaric that resistance is in its methods, it would be just and defensive. Any move by Iraq to defeat or kick out the imperialist invaders is something any revolutionary would welcome wholeheartedly."
>
> —"Marxism, War and the Fight for Socialist Revolution," *WV* No. 795, 17 January

The mounting armed resistance bolstered by a rising tide of popular anti-Americanism is beginning to affect the morale of the U.S. soldiers stationed in Iraq. They were told that Iraqis would greet them as "liberators." They were told that once Saddam Hussein was overthrown they would soon be shipped home. Instead their tour of duty is being extended to put down the burgeoning anti-American guerrilla forces.

A soldier stationed in Baghdad openly baited the Pentagon chief: "You call Donald Rumsfeld and tell him our sorry asses are ready to go home. Tell him to come spend a night in our building." An army sergeant stationed near the Iraqi capital exclaimed: "The war is supposed to be over, but every day we hear of another soldier getting killed.... The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?" (*Washington Post*, 20 June). A headline in the *New York Times* (2 June) read: "As the Fighting Continues, Some Back Home Wonder, 'Why Are People Dying?'" U.S. soldiers are dying in Iraq because they have been sent there by the capitalist rulers of this country, represented by both the Democratic and Republican parties, to oppress and exploit the people of that oil-rich country.

Over two months into this bloody colonial occupation there has been barely a peep of protest from the reformist-led antiwar movement that mobilized millions against the war. At a Palestinian Al-Awda conference in Toronto in late June, a spokesman for Workers World Party's International ANSWER coalition bellowed, "We're not going to go for just singing the word 'peace' over and over, we have to be an anti-imperialist movement." But in the buildup to the war, ANSWER ensured that its rally platforms were not so "anti-imperialist" that pro-imperialist Democratic Party politicians wouldn't feel welcome. Workers World Party sought to hoodwink young activists into thinking that the war could have been prevented if only the movement became "broad" enough so that a sufficient number of Democratic politicians found it expedient to bleat "No to Bush's war."

As soon as the invasion started, even the handful of Democrats who spoke out against the war immediately rallied in support of "our troops." By this they meant support for their imperialist army of occupation. And the reformists and pacifists who looked to these Democratic politicians simply abandoned the field.

Against the pacifists and reformists, we declared in a 19 March statement issued the day the rape of Iraq began (*WV* No. 800, 28 March):

> "It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe....
>
> "The question facing antiwar activists and workers is not merely one of more militant tactics. If there is one lesson to be drawn, it is the absolute necessity of fighting to get rid of this deeply inhumane system through workers revolution. ***Only socialist revolution can put an end to imperialist war!***"

That was the program on which the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs intervened into the massive antiwar mobilizations that preceded the war. Our revolutionary internationalist contingents provided a pole of Marxist politics counterposed to the pro-Democratic Party liberal pacifism of the protest organizers. As we warned in a call building for our contingent in an antiwar demonstration in D.C. last October: "Unless the struggle against imperialist war is based on opposition to all parties and agencies of capitalist class rule, it will be used by the bourgeois liberals to channel discontent back into the very capitalist system that breeds war. ***Break with the Democratic Party of war and racism! Build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution!***"

"Weapons of Mass Destruction" Big Lie

The Bush White House, supported by significant sections of the Democratic Party leadership, conducted a massive propaganda campaign that Saddam Hussein had large hidden caches of biological and chemical weapons which could fall into the hands of Arab terrorists operating in the U.S. (Biological weapons were originally mainly provided to the Baghdad Ba'athist regime by the U.S. itself during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.) Vice President Cheney even asserted that Saddam "has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons."

If Iraq actually had possessed nuclear weapons, America's rulers would not have risked war against that Near Eastern country. After scouring Iraq for almost three months, U.S. and British forces have found no evidence of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons. Now, Wolfowitz cynically admits what should have been obvious to all, that the "weapons of mass destruction" lie was simply a convenient justification for war: "For bureaucratic reasons we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on" (*Sunday Herald* [Scotland], 1 June).

That Bush & Co. lied has not to date done them serious political damage. But it has caused an uproar in Britain, where popular opposition to the war was far greater than in the U.S. and, moreover, was concentrated among the working-class base of the ruling Labour Party. British prime minister Tony Blair, Bush's main international ally, had to argue much more strongly than Bush that Saddam Hussein's Iraq posed a real military danger to Britain. Clare Short, one of two cabinet members who resigned after the war began, now lamely charges

that Blair "duped us all along."

But in the U.S., aside from a handful, most Congressional Democrats have effectively given Bush a free ride on his Big Lie campaign, fearful of being labeled "soft on terrorism." No less so than the Bush gang, the Democrats legitimize America's self-proclaimed role as "policeman of the world." Liberal Democrats and right-wing Republicans both assert that the American state can and should use whatever means necessary to disarm any and every country deemed a potential threat. For example, before the war some liberal Democratic "doves"—black California Congresswoman Barbara Lee, for example—criticized Bush for being obsessed with Iraq while contending that the North Korean deformed workers state posed a far greater danger to the U.S. Now, the Democrats are harping that Bush is not devoting enough resources to the domestic "war on terror."

There is also a bipartisan consensus behind the administration's threats against Syria and Iran. Despite intense efforts by Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad to conciliate the Americans, U.S. troops last week carried out an attack at the Syrian border, wounding five Syrian soldiers who were held by U.S. forces for over a week. This was followed by an attack on the nearby Iraqi village of Muger Addib, which has since been ominously sealed off to Western reporters and other outside observers. This is reminiscent of how Israel sealed off the town of Jenin in the West Bank following a massacre of Palestinians there in the spring of last year.

Meanwhile, amid ongoing and massive student-led protests against the oppressive and theocratic regime in Iran, the U.S. has drastically escalated its rhetoric against Tehran. Flinging charges that Iran has "weapons of mass destruction" and is developing a nuclear arsenal, Bush is now demanding "regime change" in Iran, threatening that Washington "will not tolerate the construction of a nuclear weapon" there. This latest vendetta has garnered international support. While France has rounded up nearly 200 supporters of the opposition People's Mujahedin—a move welcomed by the Tehran regime—it has also joined with the U.S. in a Group of Eight declaration that they would not "ignore the proliferation implications of Iran's nuclear program."

With a French-led United Nations expeditionary force currently in the war-torn and diamond-rich Congo and French troops scattered throughout its former colonial possessions in West Africa, Washington is now itself mooting military intervention on that continent, which would inevitably impinge on French interests there. Under the headline "Into Africa," an editorial in the *New York Times* (28 June) exulted: "To the delight of its liberal critics, the Bush administration has taken a constructive interest in the problems of Africa." These "white man's burden" liberals demand "more effective intervention" by U.S. imperialism in Liberia, Sudan and the Congo and endorse the Bush administration's ultimatums for "regime change" in Liberia and Zimbabwe.

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

Writing as U.S. bombs were falling on Baghdad, black Democrat Jesse Jackson proclaimed in a piece in the *Chicago Sun-Times* (25 March): "Even as we celebrate the victory in Iraq, we should seek to revive global cooperation and mutual respect." A few weeks later, Jackson called on the White House to bring this "victory" home. "The Iraq plan would make good sense in Oakland or in Chicago or in many of our cities," declared Jackson as he called for stiffer gun control and a greater police presence in the ghettos. "Finally, under the Iraq model we'd invest in hope—rebuild collapsing sewer and water systems, clean up brownfields, give incentives to urban entrepreneurs who create jobs, and build new schools and affordable housing, day care centers and public clinics" (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 6 May).

This despicable apologist for the racist American ruling class at home and abroad represents the "*progressive*" wing of the Democratic Party, no less! What the U.S. military victory in Iraq has brought working people, blacks and immigrants here is more cop terror, more layoffs and more tax cuts for the rich. The "war on terror" has meant the imprisonment of hundreds of immigrants and the deportation of thousands more. It has meant the military-style occupation of the dilapidated black town of Benton Harbor, Michigan. It has meant a string of police killings in New York City's ghettos and barrios: 57-year-old Alberta Spruill in Harlem on May 16; 35-year-old black African Ousmane Zongo in Harlem on May 22; 22-year-old Jose Mateo in Washington Heights on June 4; 41-year-old Calvin Washington in Bedford-Stuyvesant on June 28. Such is the "victory" that Jackson exults over; and these atrocities have elicited barely a peep of protest from the black Democrats, including presidential hopeful Al Sharpton.

From the immiseration of the ghettos to the attacks on health benefits for unionized workers and the elderly, there is plenty of anger at and hatred of this government and how this system works. But in the absence of organized class struggle, this anger and hatred only fuels cynicism and frustration. The AFL-CIO bureaucracy under John Sweeney has signed on to the "war on terror" and derailed class struggle in the service of "national unity." Now, with the 2004 presidential elections approaching, *Business Week* (30 June) reports that "labor leaders warn...that Democrats must be seen as strong on defense and terrorism."

Sweeney and Jackson to the contrary, the struggles of working people and oppressed minorities here can only move forward in opposition to the imperialist depredations of the U.S. ruling class abroad. We fight to link the struggles of working people in the imperialist and semicolonial countries through the building of sections of a reforged Fourth International to fight for workers power around the world.

For America's capitalist rulers, workers are merely fodder for profit at home and war abroad. The understanding that the interests of capital and labor are fundamentally counterposed is the beginning of wisdom if the working people are to struggle successfully against this system of exploitation and war. While the Republicans unabashedly enforce the interests of big business, the Democrats lie and do the same thing. As we note in the Spartacist League/U.S. Programmatic Statement:

> "The shell game through which the Democratic Party—the historic party of the Confederate slavocracy—is portrayed as the 'friend' of blacks and labor has been essential to preserving the rule of racist American capitalism. Our principle task in the U.S. is to break the power of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy over the labor movement. It is this bureaucracy—itself a component part of the Democratic Party—which politically chains the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and is the major obstacle to revolutionary class consciousness, to the forging of a revolutionary workers party."

Our task in the bastion of world imperialism is to build the multiracial workers party that will lead the proletariat in the overthrow of the American capitalist order, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie as a class and the establishment of a planned socialist economy. ***Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. troops out of the Near East now!*** ■

Deportations...

(continued from page 1)

truck driver Iyman Faris (Mohammad Rauf), a naturalized American citizen from Kashmir who sometime in March was arrested by the FBI and thrown into a cell without a trace—no phone calls or letters, no mention in any newspaper, no lawyer. In June, three months after he disappeared, the Feds announced that in May he had pled guilty, in a sealed Virginia federal courtroom, to allegedly having participated in a bizarre Al Qaeda plot to destroy the Brooklyn Bridge using blowtorches. Apparently, in its pursuit of "fighting terrorism," nothing is too fantastical for this government. Faris' case sets another sinister precedent by which a U.S. citizen, having been covertly seized and tried in a courtroom resembling the Star Chamber of the Middle Ages, faces 20 years in prison for a "plot" that only an idiot could find plausible.

That the government has the "right" to enjoy total secrecy over how it treats its victims has been affirmed in recent months by various courts from the Supreme Court on down. On June 17, for example, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia issued a ruling that the Justice Department was within its rights when it kept the identities of the 762 immigrants detained immediately after September 11 shrouded in secrecy. And when any restrictions are imposed, the Bush administration openly defies them: After his own inspector general issued a report finding that many of the same detainees were horribly mistreated even by the government's standards, Ashcroft responded that he and his aides "make no apologies."

On March 11, a federal court ruled that the approximately 680 detainees at the American base in Guantánamo, Cuba, who have never been charged with any crime, are outside the protections of constitutional law. A 17 June *New York Times* article cited recurring suicide attempts by desperate Guantánamo inmates who have been thrown into tiny open-air cages for all but a few minutes a week and denied

Mendez/Newsday

Immigrants line up to register at Manhattan INS office in January in response to government order.

access to attorneys. Many have been deprived of the opportunity to speak with others who speak their language, and all have been made to believe that they will never be released. In short, they have been tortured. ***Free all the detainees now! U.S. out of Guantánamo!***

Not content with all the other powers given it by the courts and the USA-Patriot Act, the Bush administration has just used yet another means of depriving an individual of any semblance of legal rights. Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri, a Qatari student, had been held in the criminal justice system since late 2001, first as a "material witness" in connection with the September 11 attacks, but eventually on charges of lying to the FBI and credit card fraud. He was facing trial next month and, his attorney said, "We thought he had a powerful defense." Facing the possibility that al-Marri would be acquitted, the government on June 23 declared him an "enemy combatant." He was yanked from the criminal justice system and hurled into an even more terrible nightmare in which he can be detained indefinitely, without access to a lawyer until, if ever, the military decides to bring charges against him.

This sets a precedent that could be used against Zacarias Moussaoui, a French citizen of Moroccan descent, who faces the death penalty on charges of conspiring with the September 11 hijackers. Frank W. Dunham Jr., a standby attorney for Moussaoui, aptly characterized the Bush administration's motives: "If you don't plead guilty to this charge or that charge, we're going to declare you an enemy combatant and lock you up forever." Indeed, Yasser Esam Hamdi and Abdullah al-Muhajir (Jose Padilla), both American citizens, were last year declared to be "enemy combatants" and have been effectively "disappeared" in military prisons.

The Bush administration is a vicious and racist regime—drunk on its own power, gloating over its bloody victory in Iraq and yearning to win another four years in the White House. Liberals and many ostensible socialists have already begun the refrain to "win back the White House," i.e., put the Democrats back in office. But the Patriot Act now being wielded against ever wider layers of the U.S. population was passed with the near-unanimous support of *both* parties of the ruling class, Democratic and Republican. And the last Democratic president, Clinton, whose reign is now portrayed as some kind of utopia, was responsible, among other things, for ramming through the draconian Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 which opened the door to the Patriot Act. And in fact, most of the immigrants held by the government are detained not under the Patriot Act but under Clinton's 1996 Immigration Act.

The new laws and directives that target immigrants are also aimed at black people and the whole working class. The recent spate of cop killings in New York City and elsewhere was accompanied by last month's occupation by state police of the overwhelmingly black town of Benton Harbor, Michigan. It is in the context of increasingly glaring social inequality —and the potential for an upsurge in social struggle—that the bourgeois state is reinforcing its arsenal of repression.

It will require the mobilization of vast social power to defeat the ruling class in its attacks on immigrants, blacks and labor. This social power exists within the integrated, organized labor movement of this country. It is this social power which was tapped by the Labor Black League for Social Defense and Partisan Defense Committee in organizing a labor-centered, united-front mobilization in Oakland on 9 February 2002 that demanded: "Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt! Anti-Terrorist Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks, Labor—No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act!" The demonstration illustrated on a small scale what a revolutionary workers party would do. It is necessary to forge such a party, independent of the parties of the ruling class, which will mobilize against racist repression and in defense of immigrants as part of the struggle for a workers America. ***Defend immigrant rights! Down with the government's "war on terror"!*** ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

U.S. "Road Map" Means Slaughter of Palestinians

JUNE 30—Following a "cease-fire" agreement hrokered by Washington with three Palestinian groups, Israel has begun pulling its troops nut nf a handful of areas in the Gaza Strip. But when Israel and its U.S. patrons talk of "peace," you can he sure there is going to he another massacre of Palestinians. While the Palestinian Authority has agreed to carry out joint patrols with Israeli troops, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon is demanding nothing less than a civil war against opponents of the Zionist occupation—"a comprehensive, ongoing war by the new Palestinian government," as he put it.

On June 4, President Bush, at a meeting with Sharon and Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas (a/k/a Abu Mazen) in Aqaba, Jordan, launched his "road map" for the (eventual) creation of a rump Palestinian "state" in (part of) the Occupied Territories. The announcement was followed by a series of Israeli military assaults, including missile strikes into densely populated Gaza City, that left 24 Palestinians dead in a single week. Supposedly aimed at heading off terror attacks by assassinating Hamas militants, the Zionist atrocities were in fact designed to provoke *more* suicide bomhings. The Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas responded hy killing 21 Israelis in the same week of bloodshed, most of them civilians criminally cut down simply hecause they were Israeli.

photo credits: Castelnuovo/NY Times, AFP

Bush flanked by Palestinian prime minister Abbas and Israeli prime minister Sharon at Aqaba, Jordan on June 4. "Peace summit" was followed by June 10 Israeli missile attack on Gaza.

It was a similar Zionist provocation that triggered the current cycle of Israeli terror and Palestinian resistance in the fall of 2000, when Sharon marched through the Muslim holy shrine of Al Aksa in Jerusalem with more than a thousand heavily armed soldiers. When U.S. president Clinton met Yasir Arafat in November 2000, Israel responded by blowing up an activist of Arafat's Fatah organization—also killing random pedestrians. Similarly, Colin Powell's announcement of a "peace" initiative in June 2001 was met with an Israeli missile strike in the West Bank. When Arafat declared a ceasefire in Deeember 2001, Israel again responded by assassinating a Fatah leader, touching off the biggest wave of suicide bombings yet seen. That led in March 2002 to Zionist troops reoccupying Palestinian territories throughout the West Bank, where they remain today.

Through every Zionist campaign of slaughter of Palestinians, Israel has been backed to the hilt by the U.S. imperialists—Democrats and Republicans—with arms, supplies and billions in cash. When Bush mildly chided Sharon for a recent helicopter gunship attack, this provoked cries of outrage from liberal Democrats and right-wing Republicans alike.

Renewed assertions of U.S. power in the Near East in the wake of its invasion and occupation of Iraq will inevitably mean more slaughter of Palestinians. As part of the latest deal, the U.S. will literally be dealing in Palestinian blood: so-called "targeted assassinations" of Palestinian militants will now be explicitly approved by U.S. monitors!

The agreement for a partial Israeli pullout from Gaza and Bethlehem is a grotesque caricature of the "Gaza-Jericho first" deal that was the first step of the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords, which created the Palestinian Authority. In an article headlined, "Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto," we wrote that this deal "does not offer even the most deformed expression nf self-determination" and instead "would place the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" (*WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993).

Ten years later, much of the West Bank resembles a wasteland of destroyed huildings, wrecked infrastructure and ahandoned villages. Every town of any significance is surrounded by military checkpoints, cement hlocks, barbed wire or trenches. The number of ultra-chauvinist settlers, who freely rampage throughout the Occupied Territories, stealing land and terrorizing Palestinians, has doubled since 1993 to total snme 400,000 today, including in East Jerusalem. The entire West Bank is dotted with military outposts and fortified settlements, crisscrossed by "bypass roads" that are off-limits to Palestinians. Defense of the Palestinians must hegin with the demand for ***the immediate removal of all anti-Arab fortifications in the Occupied Territories—the troops, the settlements and the apartheid highway netwark.***

To add the finishing touches to what will resemble a concentration camp or ghetto more than a state, the Zionists are constructing a concrete wall around the entire West Bank, replete with barbed wire and guard towers every thousand feet, to go with the electrified fence that already surrounds Gaza. According to a report hy Jonathan Cook in the *International Herald Tribune* (27 May), Sharon recently said that the wall will he at least 625 miles long, nearly three times the length of the Green Line, the border between Israel and the West Bank. Why so long? Cook explained:

> "Palestinian research based on land expropriation orders issued by the Israeli Army produces a map that shows the wall winding its way deep into the heart of the Palestinian state, twisting and turning in an elaborate route designed to keep a large number of the settlers on 'Israel's side' of the wall and minimize the amount of territory left to the Palestinians. Israel is also preparing a second, similarly tortuous wall near the eastern border of the West Bank, which it shares with Jordan, that will steal even more land from the Palestinians and offers no obvious security benefits. After the wall is finished, at a cost of more than $2 billion, the Palestinians will live in two minuscule states behind concrete and electrified fencing, restricted to their main population centers."

This is the "unilateral separation" that the Zionist "peace camp," represented by the likes of Meretz spokesman Yossi Sarid, has clamored for.

According to *Le Monde Diplomatique* (November 2002), an estimated 290,000 Palestinians will find themselves on the Israeli side of the wall—as will all of East Jerusalem and surrounding suburbs. Many of them will be cut off from their fields or other means of subsistence. Some 70,000 of these Palestinians "do not officially have the right to reside in Israel" and therefore "are extremely vulnerable and will prohably be forced to leave." Indeed, the resulting Palestinian "state" may well beenme a dumping ground for Israel to expel its Palestinian "citizens," who make up over 20 percent of the population.

Bush: "God Instructs Me..."

The 1993 Oslo accords, far from ushering in an independent Palestinian state, paved the way for the current immiseration and ghettoization nf the Palestinian people. Today, Israel would not even countenance withdrawal from all of the West Bank and Gaza. Fnllowing a 1998 agreement engineered by Clinton, historian Norman G. Finkelstein aptly commented: "Apart from 'extremists,' no one any longer speaks about full withdrawal. Indeed, the call for full withdrawal is now equated with the call for zero withdrawal, as pundits condemn the 'extremists on hoth sides'."

Just a few years ago, calls for forced expulsion of the Palestinians—euphemistically called "transfer"—and the laheling of the West Bank by their biblical names of Judea and Samaria were publicly voiced only by the fringe elements (like Sharon) on the ultraright of Israeli society.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 807

1 August 2003

Big Liars—Bush and the Democrats

U.S./British Troops Out of Iraq Now!

AP

Corbis SABA

U.S. military truck blown up in Baghdad. American soldier enforcing colonial occupation in Baghdad's Sadr City.

U.S. Hands Off Liberia!

JULY 29—The Bush administration immediately heralded the slaughter of Uday and Qusay Hussein, whose deaths were purchased by a bounty of $15 million per head, as the beginning of the end of the resistance to the U.S. colonial occupiers in Iraq. Within four days, eight more American soldiers were in body bags, and a total of 15 have been killed in the last eight days. When U.S. forces entered Baghdad less than four months ago, polls showed overwhelming support for the Bush administration and the war. In the triumphant afterglow of that moment, most didn't particularly care if Hussein was captured or if a single "weapon of mass destruction" was ever unearthed and were willing to entertain the prospect of getting it on with all "our enemies." That glow is fading fast. With each American casualty popular support has declined, so that now just over 55 percent of those polled approve of the war and Bush.

Notably, the strongest expression of popular dissatisfaction with the occupation is coming from those U.S. troops on the ground in Iraq and from their families at home, who anticipated their early return. The quick ticker-tape sendoff by cheering "liberated" Iraqis promised to American troops—hyped especially by Vice President Cheney and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz—has failed to materialize. The e-mail traffic home from GIs is filled with bitter recriminations against those who put them in the Iraqi inferno. When a colonel at Fort Stewart, Georgia tried to address a meeting of 800 army wives last month, he was forced to flee the room by their angry screams and curses.

Moreover, the war and occupation have required the use of the temps of the armed services, the National Guard, to a greater extent than any military action since the Korean War. Often in their thirties and with jobs and families, Guardsmen have increasingly been used as regular forces. Recently a National Guard truck in Iraq was spotted with the sign "ONE weekend a month *MY ASS!*" plastered on its windshield.

Added to all this is the potential social dynamite of the occupation's cost, now projected to run to $4 billion a month (with another billion a month for Afghanistan), over double the amount initially estimated. The recession is supposedly over, but job losses continue to increase by the tens of thousands and no recovery is in sight; many working people are beginning to realize that they are the ones who will pay the price for this exercise in imperialist ambition. With tax revenues shrinking, compounded by the obscene tax breaks put in place for the rich, working and poor people are just getting a taste of the dregs from the cup of social decay prepared for them by their rulers—a cup that will continue to be filled by layoffs, attacks on health care, education, public transportation and each and all of the benefits that have accrued to the masses as a result of the bosses' past concessions in social struggle.

Black Democrats Front for Racist U.S. Imperialism

It is in this context that the mountain of lies used by Bush and his cabal of right-wing hawks and "neoconservative" braintrusters to pave the way for war against a weak and essentially defenseless country has come under scrutiny. Although Bush's allegation in his January State of the Union address that Iraq was seeking out uranium to produce nuclear weapons has drawn the most attention, that was only a fraction of the unending barrage of outright fabrications by the administration and its toadies in the bourgeois media. First there was the myth that Saddam had worked hand in glove with Al Qaeda in carrying out the criminal World Trade Center attack. Then came the now obviously bankrupt assertion that Iraq possessed vast quantities of chemical and biological agents of warfare, punctuated by the incredible claim that it was months away from developing nuclear weapons (doubtless to be delivered by rowboat).

Secretary of State Colin Powell then provided the UN with scant few "proofs" of the existence of "weapons of mass destruction." Each of the sites he presented

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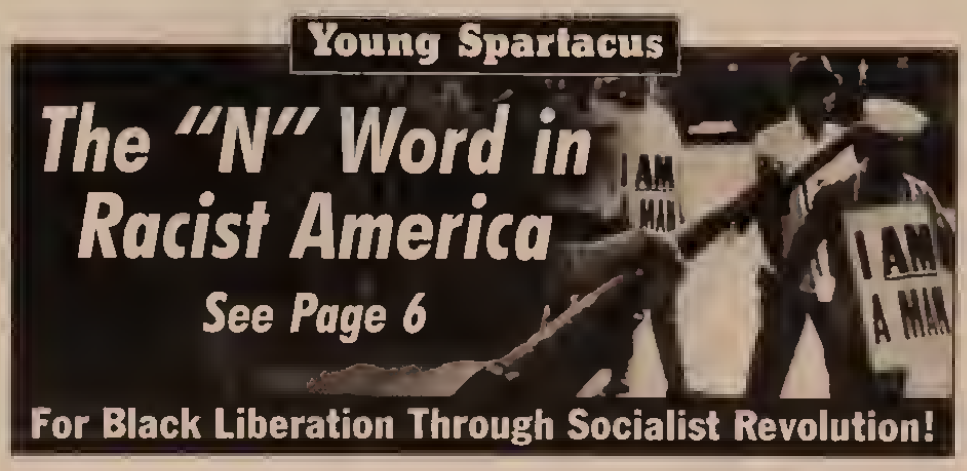
Young Spartacus



The "N" Word in Racist America

See Page 6

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

7 25274 81030 7 31

Civil Rights Fighter, Friend of PDC
In Honor of Sam Jordan

Jordan family

1925-2003

We print below a slightly edited presentation given in memory of Sam Jordan at the Bay Area Partisan Defense Committee/Labor Black League picnic held on July 21:

It is fitting for us to honor the memory of Sam Jordan at this PDC/LBL picnic. He came to some of our fundraising picnics: sometimes he even barbecued the chickens. Sam died on June 29 after a long illness.

He owned a bar, Sam Jordan's, in the black Bay View/Hunter's Point district, which he advertised as "internationalist." A friend who used to drive for MUNI [transit system] told me that some black MUNI drivers also call themselves "internationalists." Like Sam, they meant integrationists, not black nationalists. People of all races were welcome at Sam's, which was frequented by longshoremen, MUNI drivers and other unionists.

We met Sam during the 1980s, and he offered the use of his bar to us to organize—from defense of black electrician and LBL member Jeff Higgins, who was the target of disgusting racist harassment when he worked at SF General Hospital, to fund-raisers for our successful labor/black mobilizations that stopped the Klan, to defense of former Black Panther Party leader Geronimo [ji Jaga] Pratt and later Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Sam Jordan was active in civil rights struggles in San Francisco: for integration of public housing, against school segregation, against police brutality. He opened his bar and restaurant in 1959, offering its use to neighborhood civil rights activists. He was a tirelessly generous man as well; no one went away hungry, whether they could pay for a meal or not. The Bay View district once had slaughterhouses and was called Butcher Town by many. Sam was known as the "Mayor of Butcher Town."

He was born in 1925 in a small town in Texas and moved to San Francisco in 1947 after a stint in the segregated U.S. Navy. He worked here as a warehouseman in the ILWU [longshore union]. He was also a boxer, and won the San Francisco Golden Gloves Championship at the age of 21.

In 1961 Sam agreed to emcee a fundraiser for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which put him in contact with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Sam often talked about Asher Harer, an SWPer and a member of ILWU Local 10. In August 1963, Sam attended the March on Washington and a Freedom Now Party convention held afterwards, in which the SWP had a hand.

In 1963 Sam Jordan became the first black person to run for mayor of San Francisco. The city had just seen massive civil rights protests against widespread racist discrimination in employment. Thousands sat in at auto row dealerships, the Palace Hotel, and Mel's drive-in. Asher Harer was his speech writer; the *Militant* covered his campaign. Here's a quote from Sam's official statement mailed out to all voters:

> "As an independent Negro candidate, one hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation, I advocate the program of the Negro Revolution—Freedom Now. In the interests of all the people, I call for an end to dependence on the two old do-nothing parties; for a 30-hour week with 40-hour pay to create jobs for the unemployed, both black and white; child-care centers for working mothers; more aid for senior citizens; an end to discrimination and segregation in employment, union membership, housing, and public facilities. End *de facto* segregation in schools, and police mistreatment of minority people. Vote for Freedom Now!"
>
> —*Militant*, 30 September 1963

Sam was invited to address an ILWU Local 10 union meeting to ask for support. Union members moved to rescind the Local's endorsement of Democrat John F. Shelley and endorse Jordan instead. It didn't pass, but nearly half of the 800 members present voted for it. This vote was all the more impressive because ILWU Local 10 historically was run by supporters of the Stalinist Communist Party (CP), which collaborated with the class enemy, the racist capitalist Democratic Party.

Sam's campaign for mayor was blacked out by the press, including the CP's *People's World*, and the black *Sun Reporter* (its editor, Carlton Goodlett, was a Democratic Party hack). When Sam spoke to a rally of a thousand students at SFSU, the *Militant* reported: "The news blackout of his campaign was a conscious policy. It reflects the worry business and labor officialdom feel over the rise of an independent movement of minority and working people" (11 November 1963).

Unfortunately, by the 1960s the SWP was no longer the revolutionary Marxist party it had once been. They tailed alien class forces, such as the black nationalists. Our predecessor, the Revolutionary Tendency, was formed in struggle against this political degeneration. We fought to win civil rights activists to a Marxist program, revolutionary integrationism, to the understanding that anti-black racism is the bedrock of American capitalism, that the only way to end racist oppression is through the third American revolution—socialist revolution led by an integrated revolutionary workers party, independent of the capitalist parties. Had we been the majority in the SWP at the time Sam Jordan met the SWP, we might have won him—an "internationalist," an anti-racist integrationist and a real fighter—to revolutionary internationalism. ■

The Origins of Bolshevism

TROTSKY

LENIN

August 1903 marked the emergence of V.I. Lenin's Bolsheviks (majority) in a split with the Mensheviks (minority) at the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. Initially precipitated by Lenin's insistence that party membership be open only to those "who accept its programme and who support the Party both financially and by personal participation in one of the Party organizations," the split prefigured Lenin's struggle for a revolutionary vanguard party of the proletariat, culminating in his fight during World War I for a thoroughgoing split with the opportunist Social Democrats of the Second International. Lenin's struggle guides us today as we fight for new Bolshevik parties as part of a reforged Fourth International.

The stronger our Party organisations, consisting of *real* Social-Democrats, the less wavering and instability there is *within* the Party, the broader, more varied, richer, and more fruitful will be the Party's influence on the elements of the working-class *masses* surrounding it and guided by it. The party, as the vanguard of the working class, must not be confused, after all, with the entire class.... No sensible Social-Democrat has ever doubted that under capitalism even the trade union organisations (which are more primitive and more comprehensible to the undeveloped sections) are incapable of embracing the entire, or almost the entire, working class. To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses gravitating towards it, to forget the vanguard's constant duty of *raising* ever wider sections to its own advanced level, means simply to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks. And it is just such a shutting of one's eyes, it is just such forgetfulness, to obliterate the difference between those who associate themselves and those who belong, those who are conscious and active and those who only help.

—V.I. Lenin, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back" (1904)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 29 July.

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Publications of the Prometheus Research Library

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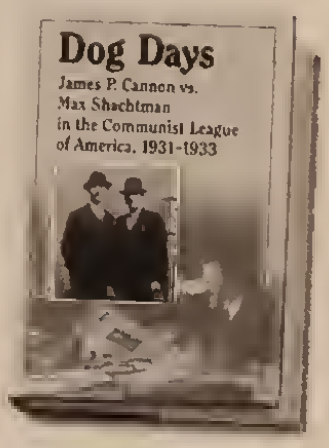

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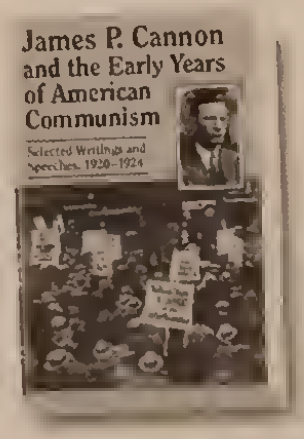

This volume of Cannon's writings covers the period when he was one of the principal leaders of the American section of the Communist International. Extensive introduction and explanatory notes, bibliography, glossary, index, 16 pages of rare photographs. 624 pages; smyth-sewn binding. (1992)

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Bill Logan: From Krafft-Ebing to Mother Theresa?

BT: Renegades for Hire

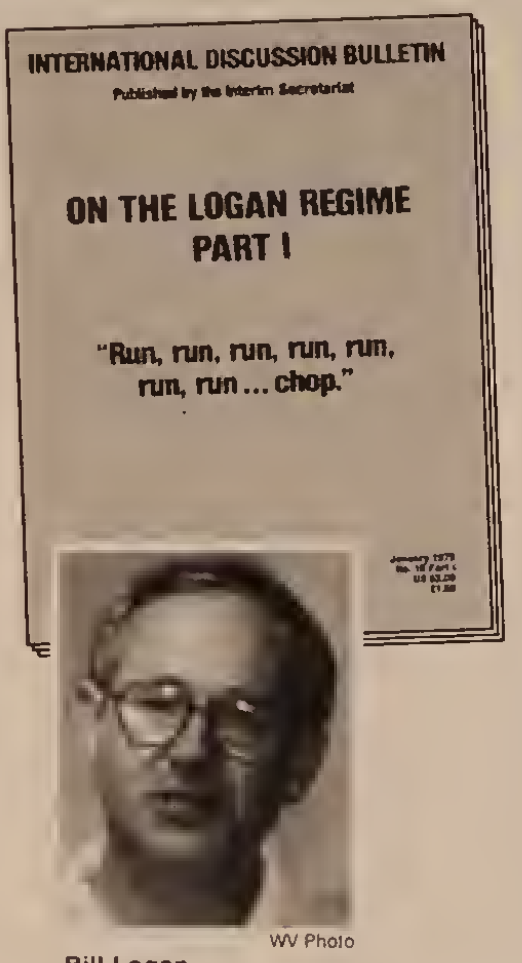
Lately we have been on the receiving end of a collective howl slandering us as "chauvinists" coming from a collection of putative leftist organizations that are as disparate as they are minuscule. In the U.S., the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) declares that we are "Zionists" because our forthright defense of the Palestinian people against the genocidal Zionist rulers is not predicated on the elimination of the Hebrew-speaking people. Next comes the Internationalist Group (IG) raving that we are adapting to "social-chauvinism" because we speak openly about the need to combat retrograde consciousness among workers and the oppressed (see "Cynics and Demagogues: An IG Provocation," *WV* No. 789, 18 October 2002). Simultaneously the IG is running an international campaign in defense of its *líder minimo* Negrete *falsely* charging that we accused him of being an agent provocateur, i.e., a police agent. Why? Because we had the temerity to point out that their slanders of us as racists were a set-up for provocations and worse against our organization.

Now this chorus smearing us as "chauvinists" has been joined by an outfit with a pathology all its own—the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT). Offering its services to the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) at a recent "Marxism" conference in London, the BT appeared with a leaflet smearing Jim Robertson, one of the founding leaders of our international tendency, with the charge of "vulgar chauvinism." And no less than that, an American whose supposed "self-satisfied great-power chauvinism" is aimed at peoples from the Near East, specifically the Kurds. The BT smears Robertson with the scurrilous claim that he characterized Kurds as "turds."

It should be noted that slanders against communist leaders are commonly flung by anti-Marxist opponents (Marx as a "chauvinist," Lenin as a "German agent," Trotsky as a "bloodthirsty butcher," Cannon as a "window-smasher," etc.). These attacks are not "personal"—they are meant as attacks on the very existence of the Marxist movement and have always rightly been viewed as such.

The BT's role at "Marxism" is a case in point. The SWP seeks to salvage the "good name" of British imperialism (and above all its "honorable" Labour Party representatives) by denouncing "Bush's war" against Iraq. The BT leaflet was an incitement for the goons and censors of the SWP, who proceeded to surround our lit table, trying to block our salespeople and threatening that if any of our people got into one of their putatively "public" forums we would be "dealt with." And they were as good as their word. Some of our comrades who were inadvertently called on to speak had their tickets ripped up and others were barred from getting in altogether.

As millions took to the streets around the world in protest against the impending war on Iraq, ICL sections built revolutionary internationalist contingents calling for the military defense of Iraq and for mobilizing the proletariat in struggle against their "own" capitalist rulers. What we fought for in the antiwar movement didn't go down well with the reformists, who were busy trying to dupe people into thinking that the war could be stopped by building the broadest possible movement, particularly by allying with the representatives and institutions of the very imperialist system that breeds war. When two of our young women comrades took the floor at an antiwar teach-in in London last February to point out that opposition to the impending war on Iraq meant opposition to the very Labour government that was prosecuting it, Chris Bambery, a lead honcho of the British SWP, threatened that anyone who didn't politically support the Stop the War Coalition "deserves a bullet in the head." As the Spartacist League/Britain wrote in its statement of protest (*WV* No. 799, 14 March): "This is the real face of the SWP's 'give peace a chance' coalition-building: you've got to silence the reds to get workers and youth to lie down like lambs with the wolves of the Labour Party whilst they wage war on Iraq and against working people at home!"



WV Photo

Bill Logan

Some years back our forthright recognition of and struggle against racial and ethnic hostilities also was met with a barrage from a rotten mélange of rat groups charging us with "racism." As we wrote in our response, "Hate the Truth, Hate the Spartacist League: New Left Moralists' Big Lie Campaign" (*WV* No. 217, 20 October 1978): "The charge of racism (like the charge of 'cop') is the dirtiest mud that can be slung. In this racist society it is a charge that presumes guilt until proven innocent. To reply presumably confirms that suspicion is widespread and perhaps justified. To remain silent is taken as evidence of guilt."

As Marxists we do not pander to the national conceits or chauvinism of *any* people, but fight for the socialist emancipation of the proletariat and liberation of all the oppressed. This gets under the skin of those who are animated not by Marxism but by liberal moralism and vicarious "Third World" nationalism. (Such does not animate the Bolshevik Tendency, who in fact have nothing but sneering contempt for struggles against racial, national or ethnic oppression, but we will get to that later.) But their lies against us are in the service of larger, truly social-chauvinist, reformist outfits that are out to get us *because* we fight for proletarian revolutionary internationalist opposition to the imperialist rulers and the brutal depredations they, and their neocolonial satraps, visit upon oppressed peoples around the globe.

Defense of the Palestinians against the genocidal onslaught by the Zionist rulers of Israel was central to our efforts to mobilize for our revolutionary contingents. We stood out in sharp relief against the pacifism and outright social-patriotism peddled by the rest of the putative left, which mostly dumped any mention of the Palestinians in the name of "unity" with everything from pro-Zionist Democratic Party politicians in the U.S. to bourgeois pacifists who abhor all "violence," especially that of the oppressed against their oppressors. At the same time that fake leftists are denouncing us as Zionists, our comrades in Germany are being physically attacked by the so-called "anti-nationals"—who are pro-Zionist stooges for German imperialism—for our defense of the Palestinians.

The Pathology of Renegades

The BT's leaflet, titled "Robertson's 'Vulgar Chauvinism'," quotes a postscript to a letter they had written to *Workers Vanguard* complaining because we had nailed them on their chauvinist opposition to independence for the Kurdish people. Said postscript cites a 15 October 1978 presentation given by comrade Robertson to the New York local of the Spartacist League/U.S. The subject was the fight to remove the national chairman of our British section, Bill Logan, who had been running a nasty and brutal operation.

Premising his remarks with examples of how oppression oppresses, comrade Robertson spoke to how Logan had built his "regime" by playing on the internalization of oppression, particularly of young women as well as any considered to be of the "lower orders" by the viciously class-conscious and racist powers that be in British society. The speech observed: "Internalized oppression is an evil, evil thing. And I think it lay at the root of some of the bad regimes that we have uncovered here and there in our organization. Because it always takes two. It takes those who are insecure, become brutal or sadistic or pretentious, little Stalins. It also takes victims. And the victimization comes, generally, out of the playing upon internal insecurities and fear." Indeed every paragraph of Robertson's speech conveyed our party's intolerance toward all forms of chauvinism and oppression, which is fundamental to our purposes as a revolutionary Marxist organization.

In this context, Reuben Samuels, a leading cadre of our international who was in London at the time, was criticized for absenting himself from the urgently posed fight for the survival of a Spartacist section in Britain: "Criticism of Reuben: the whole time where was Reuben? He was off in the library, studying the Turds for his class. Right? He wasn't playing

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Editorial Statement

In publishing the exchange with the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) in *WV* No. 806 (4 July), the editor and other comrades centrally responsible for the production of the paper did not inform comrade James Robertson of the BT's scurrilous, lying smear of him as a "chauvinist" in a "P.S." to a letter ostensibly on the Kurds. Instead we unilaterally decided to excise the "P.S." On July 4, the BT surfaced with the "P.S." in the form of a leaflet at the Socialist Workers Party's "Marxism" event in London, sneering that *WV* "implicitly accepts" their vile accusations. No we don't! We excised the "P.S." because it was a contemptible lie, but in so doing fell into the BT's trap and implied guilt with our evasive silence. Behind this lay a bloodless conception of politics taking as good coin the BT's screed on the Kurds, which was nothing other than a wrapper for a poison pill.

The BT's 4 July leaflet proves that their provocative "P.S." was the whole point of their letter. We should have known. The BT could not care less about the Kurds or any other oppressed people. From its inception, the BT has been a dubious outfit with a hostile obsession for the Spartacist League and in particular its founding co-leader, Jim Robertson.

Slanders against leaders of the communist movement are nothing new. They are the stock in trade of opponents of revolutionary Marxism to set up entire organizations for hostile attack and state repression. The method is: kill an organization by chopping off its head.

The Editorial Board's actions flouted the democratic-centralist norms on which the Spartacist League and International Communist League operate. Comrade Robertson is a member of the Editorial Board and Spartacist League National Chairman, and was personally the target of the BT slander. Yet he was never sent a copy of the BT letter including the "P.S." Beyond stupid, arrogant and uncomradely, this break in collaboration was an attack on our own revolutionary continuity. The Spartacist League is, and has been from its inception, an organization that says what is, without bowing to petty-bourgeois sensibilities. The actions of the Editorial Board could be borrowed from the practices of centrism, i.e., a divergence between what we stand for and what we do.

Our Declaration of Principles adopted at the 1966 founding conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. cites Trotsky's injunction: "To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International." Consistent with this purpose, we publicly acknowledge the disservice we have done to our party, to comrade Robertson, and to our readers.

Free All MOVE Prisoners!

25th Anniversary of Powelton Village Siege

Twenty-five years ago in the early morning hours of 8 August 1978, an army of nearly 600 cops surrounding a home in the Powelton Village section of Philadelphia opened fire. It was a furious fusillade unleashed on the MOVE commune, a mostly black, radical back-to-nature collective. When the shooting stopped, the cops came up one short. Officer James Ramp, a central figure in the Philadelphia Police Department's "Stakeout" squad, was killed in the police crossfire.

It was the inspector of the Civil Affairs unit (i.e., the notorious "red squad"), George Fencl, who had shouted over the cop bullhorn, "You have exactly two minutes in which to come out." Firemen had turned on "deluge guns," flooding the basement where the MOVE members were huddled trying to hold babies and dogs aloft to avoid the swelling waters. One by one the MOVE members surrendered, climbing out through the cellar windows. The last was Delbert Africa, a former Black Panther. He was smashed across the face with the helmet of another member of the elite "Stakeout" squad, who then dragged him by his dreadlocks across the street where three other cops proceeded to viciously beat, kick and stomp on Delbert's prone body.

All the adults forced from the building were charged with the "murder" of Ramp. The cops employed bulldozers to completely demolish the house, turning the entire property into a vacant lot, effectively destroying all evidence at what was supposed to be a crime scene. The only thing standing was a port-a-john to which the cops had taped an execrable message, "We removed most of the shit from the neighborhood. This is for the rest."

This grotesque cop atrocity was not the first to be visited upon MOVE, nor was it to be the last. It was the culmination of over a year in which the MOVE headquarters were under a police starvation siege, as authorities under arch-racist mayor Frank Rizzo established an extensive blockade of several streets around the house. Earlier, in 1976, blackjack-wielding cops had descended on a MOVE celebration and in the resulting melee, Janine Africa's newborn infant was trampled to death.

During this series of confrontations with the racist Philly cops, the MOVE commune was predictably vilified by the local media. A powerful exception was the young and respected radio journalist, Mumia Abu-Jamal. By the time of the 1978 assault, Mumia had already interviewed victims of police brutality and was acquiring a reputation as the "voice of the voiceless." Indeed, at Rizzo's press conference where Mumia and others asked a series of embarrassing questions on the day of the attack, the mayor railed on about the need for the reinstitution of the death penalty and blamed a "new breed of journalism" for the death of the cop. Looking right at Mumia, he spewed, "They believe what you write, what you say. And it's got to stop. And one day, and I hope it's in my career, that you're going to have to be held responsible and accountable for what you do."

Philadelphia Daily News

Philly cops brutalize Delbert Africa in 1978 siege of MOVE home.

Mumia had been in the cops' cross hairs since his days as the Minister of Information in the Philadelphia Black Panther Party when he was a teenager. But now he was again front and center, telling the victims' side of a story of unspeakable cop brutality. Mumia recalled that after the Powelton Village cop attack, he "gave voice to the members of the MOVE organization.... Most black reporters ignored them, while the white press slandered them."

The trial of the nine adult supporters of MOVE who survived the cop attack on 8 August 1978 was, predictably, a travesty of justice, even by bourgeois standards. Despite contradictory ballistic and forensic testimony, despite supposed videotape evidence which conveniently malfunctioned at the second the cop was shot, all of the MOVE 9 defendants were pronounced guilty of third-degree murder and in August 1981 sentenced to prison terms of 30 to 100 years each. When the trial judge, Edwin Malmed, was asked, "Who shot James Ramp?" his reply was, "I haven't the faintest idea."

In a recent letter to Kevin Gilroy, secretary of the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization affiliated to the Spartacist League, Debbie Africa, a member of the MOVE 9, wrote:

> "According to the legal laws of this system a person is innocent until proven guilty, yet innocent MOVE people have sat in prison for 25 long years, despite Judge Malmed admitting he don't know who killed James Ramp, and despite all the blatant contradictions in testimony and official reports on the fatal bullet suffered by James Ramp....
>
> "Every arrest, every prison sentence, every vicious beatin, every baby killing MOVE suffered, at the hands of this system is *legal*, because they were initiated by legal police, sanctioned by legal judges and perpetuated by legal prison administrators....
>
> "The holocaust was as legal as Hitler's government, but you will *never* convince a holocaust survivor that it was *right*. Slavery was legal but it will never be *right*."

The notoriously brutal and corrupt Philadelphia cops were not done with their deadly racist assaults on MOVE and its supporters. Months after the sentencing of the MOVE 9, on 9 December 1981, Mumia Abu-Jamal was gunned down as he ran toward a scene where his brother was being beaten by a cop at the corner of Locust and 13th Streets in central Philadelphia. Almost killed on the spot, Mumia was arrested for and grotesquely framed up on demonstrably false charges of killing another Philadelphia policeman, Daniel Faulkner. The first cops to arrive on the scene where Mumia lay critically wounded were "Stakeout" squad members and the highest ranking officer there was Alfonse Giordano, a former "Stakeout" commander. Later that night, George Fencl was called into the investigation. These cops knew precisely who Mumia was—they had been targeting him for years.

And six months later, in a kangaroo court presided over by notorious hanging judge Albert Sabo, replete with racist jury-rigging and a prosecution case resting on lies and coerced "witnesses," Mumia was sentenced to death. Despite mountains of evidence proving his innocence, including a sworn affidavit by one Arnold Beverly that he—not Mumia—killed Faulkner, and an international outcry demanding his freedom, Mumia remains on death row.

But the bourgeoisie's racist blood lust against MOVE was not satiated. In one of the most hideous examples of state repression ever visited on the domestic population of America, on 13 May 1985 Philly cops working together with the FBI and the BATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) came in to finish the job they began in 1978. They dropped a high-powered explosive bomb on MOVE's Osage Avenue home, incinerating eleven black people, including five children, and leaving an entire black neighborhood in smoldering rubble. This time there was to be no escape. "Stakeout" cops drove MOVE members back into the inferno under a hail of gunfire. Some of these cops described themselves as "veterans of '78," including those who had brutalized Delbert Africa seven years earlier.

In the aftermath of this horrific and murderous assault on MOVE, the Spartacist League moved to solidarize with the victims of this racist atrocity. While the

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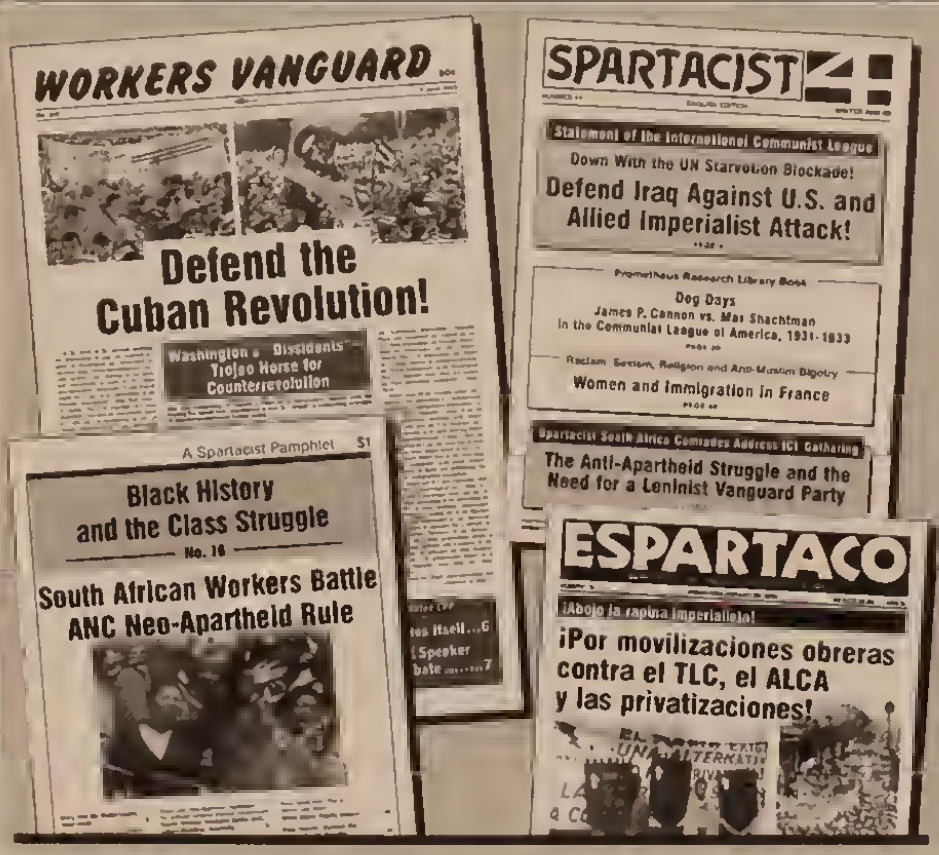
Workers Vanguard Subscription Drive



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AP

Iranian students demonstrate against Islamic fundamentalist regime in June. Student protesters were thrown into Tehran's infamous Evin prison (right).

For Workers Revolution in Iran!

Chanting "The clerical regime is nearing its end!" and "Down with the Islamic Repuhlic!" thousands of students and other protesters took to the streets of Iranian cities this summer in another round of mass demonstrations against the hloody theocratic rulers. The protests hegan at Tehran University on June 10 when several hundred students denounced plans to privatize the universities. Within days they had spread to other cities and drawn in broader layers of society.

The regime cracked down with brutal ferocity, unleashing its police and paramilitary Ansar Hezbollah thugs to arrest at least 4,000. One demonstrator was killed in the southern city of Shiraz, while an Iranian Canadian photojournalist was heaten to death hy authorities after taking photos near Tehran's infamous Evin prison. Another center of protest was Kurdistan University in Sanandaj, where troops besieged and occupied the campus, reportedly killing one student. Faced with the threat of more widespread protests on July 9 to mark the suppression of the 1999 student revolt, the government closed Tehran University and hanned all public gatherings.

Twenty-four years after a reactionary Islamic movement led hy Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini rode to power on the back of a popular upheaval against the despised U.S.-backed Shah and his SAVAK secret police torturers, Iran is again seething with discontent. The Islamic regime is facing all-sided social unrest, the impact of which will he felt throughout the Near East. In most of the region, the depredations of imperialism combined with the evident bankruptcy of hourgeois nationalism and the hetrayals of the Stalinist Communist parties have fueled the growth of Islamic fundamentalism. But in Iran, which has lived through 25 years of "Islamic paradise," the entire tendency of struggle is away from the forces of religious reaction.

While the deeply corrupt religious leaders live like kings, life is ever more miserahle for the working class and urhan and rural poor. Real incomes have fallen by fully three-quarters since the onset of Islamic rule. Some 25 percent of the workforce is unemployed while at least a million workers with jobs have not heen paid for months, in some cases for years. Despite this desperate economic situation, sections of the working class are becoming restive. Last July, 20,000 workers demonstrated in Tehran against poor working conditions, low pay and a new labor bill that would make firings much easier. Thousands more defied a government han to demonstrate this May Day. Around the same time, 2,000 textile workers in Behshahr went on hunger strike to protest non-payment of wages for more than two years. Ralies of up to 25,000 workers and their families backed the strikers, leading the regime to declare martial law in the city.

The population of Iran is very young, very highly educated and very repressed. Some 70 percent is under 30, in large measure the result of the slaughter of a whole generation of young men during the sordid 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War. That war was fueled by the U.S., which had an anti-Iranian tilt. The struggle against the all-pervasive social restrictions of the Iranian regime finds its most explosive expression in the fight for women's rights—from being able to walk down the street without having to wear the stifling *hijab* (veil) to being able to choose your own partner. Barharic punishments, including death by stoning, have heen meted out to women, homosexuals and others for "deviant" behavior. Hundreds of thousands of women have heen driven into prostitution which, along with widespread drug addiction, has grown dramatically amid the economic and social devastation. According to the government's own estimates, ***two million*** women are homeless, including many teenage girls who have run away from homc.

At the same time, unlike in many other Islamic-ruled states, women are not barred from higher education, and many are integrated in the workforce in fields like education and medicine. Women make up a majority of university students, and many are active in pro-reform movements. This spring, thousands of women defied the regime to publicly celebrate International Women's Day, and women have played a prominent role in the recent protests. The hold of the mosque over the population has drastically declined. Last year, the regime's own Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance admitted that 99 percent of the population no longer even bothers to attend Friday prayers.

With the fraying of Islamic rule, wildly diverse forces are now emerging to vie for leadership of the anti-regime struggle. These range from Islamic "reformers" to would-be communists, bourgeois nationalists and right-wing, pro-U.S. supporters of the former Shah. Bush cynically praised the recent student protests as "the beginning of people expressing themselves toward a free Iran." The Bush administration has vilified Iran as part of its international "axis of evil" and has more recently tried to whip up a furor over its supposed development of "weapons of mass destruction," demanding "regime change" in Tehran. And over 150,000 American troops are now directly across the horder in occupied Iraq and Afghanistan. *U.S. honds off Iran! All U.S. troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan!*

The youth who spearheaded mass protests against the hated Shah 25 years ago overwhelmingly considered themselves leftists, avidly reading Lenin and chanting slogans against U.S. imperialism. The pro-Moscow Tudeh (Masses) Party had a mass base among the working class, notably the powerful and strategic oil workers, while the more left-wing guerrillaist Fedayeen attracted tens of thousands of student youth to its hanners. But these organizations literally handed the working masses, oppressed nationalities, women and youthful leftists over to the new torturers of the Islamic theocracy. Upon coming to power, the Khomeini regime embarked upon the mass slaughter of the Baha'i religious minority, Kurds and other national minorities, unveiled women, militant trade unionists and all oppositionists. An entire generation of left-wing militants was wiped out. Having waded through the blood of their comrades killed hy a regime they helped to hring to power, the remnants who made it into exile were defeated, broken, demoralized and most became burnt-out cynics.

Criminally, the re-emerging Iranian left today has gone from supporting Islamic reaction against the monarchy to blocking with monarchist and other pro-U.S. forces against the Islamic rulers. Many of the recent international protests in solidarity with Iranian student demonstrators, particularly in the U.S., saw leftist groups march alongside royalists and other pro-imperialist reactionaries. If you reject the possibility of bringing the working class to revolutionary consciousness, then you necessarily end up tailing one alien class force or another.

Uniquely, the International Communist League (then known as the international Spartacist tendency) warned ***from the outset*** of the 1978-79 upheaval that, absent a decisive hreak hy the working class with the Islamic forces, the struggle would have a disastrous outcome. We raised the call: "Down With the Shah! Don't Bow to Khomeini! For Workers Revolution in Iran!" Today, again, we underscore that the only road to freedom for Iran's working people, women and oppressed nationalities lies in the independent mohilization of the working class and the fight for socialist revolution.

Iran Fake Left:

1979: With the Mullahs Against the Monarchy

2003: With the Monarchy Against the Mullahs

The 1979 "Revolution": Mass Struggle and Left Betrayal

The new generation entering into struggle today in Iran has a frame of reference vastly different than that of the 1970s. The Soviet Union, the world's first workers state, which bordered Iran and provided a global counterweight to U.S

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Worker-Communist Party of Iran

Workers demonstration in Behshahr in April.

Young Spartacus

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The "N" Word in Racist America

The word originated amid the horrors of the Middle Passage, the bartering in human flesh, the crack of the overseer's whip—the systematic enslavement and dehumanization of black Africans and their descendants on North American soil. Later, it was carved by lynch mobs, savagely intent on enforcing Jim Crow racial segregation, into the hideously mutilated bodies of their black victims. It was and remains the white-supremacist rallying cry heralding cross-burnings outside black homes, firebombings of black churches and assaults on black people on city streets. Cops bark it as they rampage through the ghettos, beating down black youth and dragging them off to jail.

Yet in recent years the word "n-----" has come to be casually thrown around by youth of all ethnic backgrounds as a sign of contemporary "hipness" and a "term of endearment." It is blasted through the airwaves in songs listened to by millions across the world and in the routines of popular black comedians. It screams from the shelves of bookstores and newsstands, the title of a best-selling book by black Harvard Law School professor Randall Kennedy last year. It has even been heard from the platforms of leftist antiwar demonstrations. In a cruel twist, the increasingly promiscuous use of this racist epithet has been driven by the hip-hop music originating in ghettos like the South Bronx and South Central Los Angeles.

For such youth, hip-hop lyrics often are an expression of defiance in the face of the raw racist reality of American society and a ruling class that could not care less whether the besieged and impoverished ghetto masses live or die. But far from being a protest against racial oppression, as some leftist black intellectuals would have it, the pervasive use of the "N" word is a result of the racist rulers' denigration of black people. This is a form of "defiance" born of demoralization and despair, a product of the ever-worsening conditions of black life and the absence of any significant social struggle in the decades since the collapse of the civil rights movement.

It is no coincidence that the only other music today that commonly includes the word in its lyrics is that of the fascists, such as the filth put out by the neo-Nazi Resistance Records. For racist reactionaries, the one redeeming feature of hip-hop is the regular use of the "N" word. In the early years of "gangsta" rap, *Newsweek* (19 March 1990) featured a "Rap Rage" cover, which did its part to encourage state repression and racist victimization of the hip-hop music scene by whipping up white fear and hatred. But the editors of *Newsweek* did hail "the disinterment of the word 'n-----'" as the "most visible contribution" to rap music's "Culture of Attitude."

We revolutionary Marxists in the Spartacus Youth Clubs have no particular attitude toward hip-hop music. What one listens to, watches or reads is a private affair. But the word "n-----" is a *program* for racist reactionaries, and we oppose its use by whites and blacks alike. In his powerful 1829 *Appeal* against slavery, black abolitionist David Walker wrote: "The white Americans have applied this term to Africans, by way of reproach for our colour, to aggravate and heighten our miseries, because they have their feet on our throats."

Young Socialist

Beaten, gassed and jailed over the course of a 64-day strike in Memphis, 1968, sanitation workers protest racist contempt for black people while marching for union recognition and improved wages.

No less today than in the past, it means not only race-terror and the lynch rope but also that the victims "deserve it." In Meridian, Mississippi earlier this month, a deranged white racist gunned down five people, including four blacks, at an aircraft parts plant, after having repeatedly terrorized black co-workers with how "he was going to come in one day and kill up a bunch of n-----s" (*New York Times*, 9 July). In this violent, racist society, the "N" word is a fighting word, as both black and white people are aware. Recalling the intense struggles of the civil rights movement, a black SL comrade explained:

> "Its use by whites was an assertion of white supremacy and the inferiority of the black race.... My home instructions were to defend the race at all cost—the 'N' word was a fighting word. You fought, period. To walk away was cowardice. My mother, a Southern-born woman, wouldn't allow cowardice in her house—not on this issue. But the shame would not have ended there. In the neighborhood I lived in, the scorn would have been just as intense. A white insulted your people, and you did nothing! This was the highest shame."

That black oppression is at the foundation of American capitalism is a direct legacy of black chattel slavery. The chains of slavery were shattered by the American Civil War, the last great bourgeois revolution and one which ushered in the most democratic period in American history, Radical Reconstruction. But the promise of Reconstruction was betrayed by the property interests of the Northern capitalists. Until almost a century later with the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, built on the courage of thousands of activists, white supremacy and Jim Crow police-state control of black people reigned in the South. Blacks who fled North were integrated into the workforce at the bottom and forcibly segregated into inner-city ghettos. The subjugation of the black masses at the bottom of this society continues to this day—but black workers also remain integrated into strategic sectors of the industrial proletariat, which alone has the social power to shatter this racist capitalist system. For the capitalists, the color line is a key weapon in enforcing class exploitation by keeping the working class divided and weakened.

The frequent use of the "N" word in hip-hop music precipitated a wide-ranging discussion within the Spartacus Youth Clubs on race in America and how it is reflected through youth culture, culminating in an educational presentation at the Youth Commission of the Eleventh National Conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. last summer. As vanguard fighters against black oppression, we struggle against every manifestation of racism and bigotry in this profoundly racist society. Against liberals like the NAACP, who appeal to the government or school authorities to censor "politically incorrect" language, we reject the illusion that racism can be legislated away. Such censorship only accords the capitalist government additional powers of repression, which are invariably used against working people and the oppressed. As one SL comrade observed in a pre-conference discussion contribution:

> "We are materialists which, with respect to the issue at hand, means our interest is in changing material reality, that is, in forever destroying the social basis for racist oppression in this country by welding labor/black power and effecting a proletarian socialist revolution. We do not hold that this can occur by sanitizing social reality à la...the advocates of 'politically correct' discourse. The mirror opposite of such efforts is attempts to make the 'N' word hip and thus, according to the proponents of this 'strategy,' to erase its racist impact. Either of these idealist pursuits shares the assumption that it is what people think that is responsible for racism and not that racist oppression is the bedrock on which the American capitalist order is maintained."

Black workers are potentially the most combative section of the proletariat; and mobilizing the labor movement in the fight for black liberation is not just one more case of championing democratic rights, but is the key to the American socialist revolution. Likewise, the "N" word is not just one more racial or ethnic slur, but is the watchword of hardened reactionaries who would spearhead a counterrevolutionary offensive rather than accept a socialist society in which black people are truly free. Any adaptation to this word can only redound to the benefit of those who view black oppression as a virtue of the existing social order. Its use can only *retard* the development of communist, i.e., liberating, consciousness.

Black Apologists for White Racism

The ideological campaign to "reclaim" the "N" word as a "term of endearment" was given national attention last year with

the publication of Randall Kennedy's *N-----: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word* (a grotesque parody of the title of C. Vann Woodward's insightful history, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* [1955]). In his viciously satisfying riposte titled "The N-Word as Therapy for Racists: Randall Kennedy's Idiotic Assault on Black People's Honor" (*Black Commentator*, 27 June 2002), Martin Kilson, the first black professor to receive full tenure at Harvard in 1968, denounced as "idiotic" the "notion that the more White Americans mouth the 'N' word the greater will he the purge of Negrophobia in their souls, as if by comparison the more today's Germans mouth the K-word the greater will he the eventual purging of Jewish-phobia in German society."

Kennedy's book "was tantamount to tossing a match at a gasoline-soaked building," wrote Kilson, pointing to a series of racist provocations unleashed by the book at Harvard Law School last spring, including a Web posting using the slur "n-g" and an e-mail by a white student crowing, "I have actually begun using the 'n-----' word more often than before." In a reply to Kilson, Kennedy confessed, "It so happens that the students involved were my students" (*Black Commentator*, 22 August 2002).

Kennedy's service on behalf of the forces of racist reaction was widely hailed by the American bourgeois media. Typical was the review in *Newsweek* (14 January 2002): "He's made his case: that this 'troublesome' word is only a word. And that words—like people—can always change." What purpose can a "changed" definition of the "N" word serve in capitalist America? None other than to legitimize the continuing degradation of black people.

Kennedy's vile little tract is a slap in the face to every black person. But attempts to legitimize the growing use of the "N" word in public discourse extend to more left-wing black intellectuals like Robin D. G. Kelley and Michael Eric Dyson. Commenting on the controversy surrounding Jennifer Lopez's use of "n---a" in her "I'm Real" remix single with rapper Ja Rule, self-described "hip-hop intellectual" Dyson wrote in the Chicago *Sun-Times* (31 July 2001):

> "One of the few privileges blacks may derive from their oppression is the ability to linguistically subvert its corrosive meanings....
>
> "And it is one of the consequences of black freedom that white folk—and other nonblacks—must not pretend not to understand the difference between blacks calling each other 'n---a' and whites and others calling us 'n---er.' Only a heady moral insolence could feign such innocence. So J-Lo, here's the deal: Puffy can say 'n---a'; you can't. Now that's real."

Responding to the likes of Dyson, Ron Scott wrote in the *Amsterdam News* (9 August 2001):

> "Well, if you really want to keep it real, try reading '100 Years of Lynchings' by Ralph Ginzburg and 'Without Sanctuary, Lynching Photography in America,' by James Allen and Hilton Als, which graphically depict the hideous lynchings of African-Americans in America. The latter has some photographs that show the N word, which was carved on their chests."

As for the supposed distinction between the term of affection and the slur in ending the word with an "-er" rather than an "-a," this is, as Scott observed, a distinction without a difference: "Remember, many white people weren't that educated, just racist as hell, so in many cases, it was spelled the latter."

As Scott remarked, "When a word is placed in the public domain the way the hip-hop community has somewhat recklessly dropped the N word, it's evident that one can no longer define who uses it." Witness the case of white Cincinnati cop Thomas Haas, who gunned down 21-year-old Rickey Moore only months after the cop killing of another black youth, Timothy Thomas, touched off a long-simmering explosion of outrage in April 2001. Five years earlier, a complaint was filed against this same cop for calling a black prisoner "n---a" while beating him into submission. According to the police report of the incident, quoted in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* (5 August 2001):

> "Officer Haas claims he used the term in a friendly manner and that he was not attempting to be disrespectful.... He also claims this is an acceptable term used by persons on the street, primarily drug dealers. He states that he is trying to be a good community police officer by 'acting the role' and by presenting himself in a manner close to the persons he serves."

Herb Robinson

Daily Pennsylvanian

Ohio University

Left-wing intellectuals Manning Marable, Robin D. G. Kelley, Michael Eric Dyson despair of integrated social and class struggle, accommodate racist status quo and use of "N" word by blacks.

The Politics of Despair

In an essay titled "Kickin' Reality, Kickin' Ballistics: 'Gangsta Rap' and Postindustrial Los Angeles" (reprinted in *Race Rebels* [1994]), Robin Kelley notes, "The generation that came of age in the 1980s was the product of devastating structural changes in the urban economy that date back at least to the late 1960s." As the rubber and steel factories that had formerly provided jobs for black youth disappeared, South Central L.A. experienced a 50 percent rise in unemployment and an almost one-third drop in median income. The ghettos "were turned into war zones," housing projects "were renovated along the lines of minimum security prisons" and "police helicopters, complex electronic surveillance, even small tanks armed with battering rams became part of this increasingly militarized urban landscape." It was these conditions that gave rise to the massive 1992 upheaval provoked by the acquittal of four white cops who had beaten and tormented black motorist Rodney King.

South Central was emblematic of every ghetto in America. From the time of the first mass migration of Southern blacks to the Northern cities in the early decades of the twentieth century, the ghetto population was used by the capitalist rulers as a "last hired, first fired" reserve army of labor, brought in when their labor was needed and cast aside in economic downturns. Witness current unemployment figures, which for black teenagers today hover at 40 percent. As the capitalists took the wrecking ball to the steel works, shut down the auto factories and cut millions of manufacturing jobs beginning in the 1970s, the population of the inner cities came to be seen as a surplus population not "worth" providing with even the most basic needs of subsistence. The "war on poverty" of the 1960s was replaced by the "war on drugs," a concerted onslaught on the ghetto masses leading to the imprisonment of up to a million young black men and women at any given time. While the 13th Amendment abolished chattel slavery, it excluded prisoners from protection against enslavement. The mainstream use of the "N" word, a symbol of slavery, recurs at a time when blacks are disproportionately imprisoned.

AP

Police occupy Benton Harbor, Michigan in June after black population erupted over cop terror (above). Material conditions of life have worsened for the black masses since the 1960s.

Chicago Historical Society

In the article "Deadly Symbiosis" (*Boston Review*, April/May 2002), Loïc Wacquant noted that the massive intensification of state repression in the ghettos came as "the capacity of the ghetto to ensure caste domination was undercut in the 1960s by economic restructuring that made African-American labor expendable." The result was "to make the ghetto more like a prison" and "the prison more like a ghetto." The further impoverishment and all-sided degradation of the inner-city masses has been used to intensify the exploitation of the entire working class, axing social programs and branding the black "underclass" as "undeserving," "indolent" and "criminal."

A few decades after the mass struggles of the civil rights movement broke the back of legalized Jim Crow segregation and formal equality for black people was decreed in this country, the conditions of life of the ghetto masses have worsened by every material standard: average family income has plunged, schools are more segregated than before civil rights programs were implemented, the unemployment rate among black youth is twice that among white youth, and an astounding *28 percent of all black men* are destined to spend some time behind bars. Poverty, chronic joblessness and jail, schools that are no more than holding pens, AIDS, crime and cop terror—these are standard aspects of life for the black population under decaying American capitalism.

Focused as it was on winning legal reforms, the liberal-led civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s was bound to the Democratic Party and thereby the capitalist order. As such, it was incapable of addressing the desperate conditions of the black inner cities, which are materially rooted in the whole system of American capitalism. A series of spontaneous ghetto rebellions broke out beginning in the mid '60s and was smashed with brute force as heavily armed police and the military occupied entire neighborhoods. At the same time, widespread anger at the Vietnam War fueled the radicalization of youth in the army and at home.

Nationalist groups promoting black capitalism and liberal politicians like black Congressman Adam Clayton Powell responded with efforts to keep the cities safe for racist American capitalism, from installing black front men in the mayor's office to colluding directly with the cops, as in the case of cultural nationalist leader Ron Karenga in Los Angeles. These betrayals had the backing of major American corporations, which were eager to fund such programs dedicated to containing black unrest and promoting business.

The government set up "war on poverty" programs that successfully co-opted a layer of black activists for the purpose of re-establishing control over the rebellious ghettos. A number of

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"N" Word...

(continued from page 7)

blacks like Coleman Young in Detroit and Maynard Jackson in Atlanta *were* installed as mayors to fire city workers, close inner-city hospitals, slash funds to social programs and bolster racist "law and order." Once the turmoil in the black communities was tempered, in the early '70s the poverty programs were massively cut. Soon after, the deindustrialization of the 1980s ravaged the black working class.

The conscious selling out of the social struggles of the '50s and '60s, which potentially could have taken a revolutionary direction given the proper leadership, and the absence of any significant struggle since that period have produced a climate of defeat and reaction in which the "N" word has gained wider "respectable" public currency. The liberal and leftist apologists for its use are both products and promoters of that defeatist mood. They reject any possibility of mass social struggle, much less integrated workers struggle, and instead glorify "cultural empowerment," which posits that black oppression exists in people's minds rather

Reuters

Sinister demagogue Louis Farrakhan addresses 1995 Million Man March.

than being inherent to American capitalism. Now as in the '60s, this is a program for capitulation to the racist status quo and is simply another means to blame the oppressed for their oppression. This gains literal expression with the prominent political influence of Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam (NOI) on the hip-hop scene.

Farrakhan: Bad News for Black People

Farrakhan has been the keynote speaker at a number of "hip-hop summit" meetings. Many black youth who disdain the "respectable" inch-at-a-time gradualism of mainstream Democratic Party politicos like Jesse Jackson take as good coin Farrakhan's occasional rhetorical forays against the racist rulers. In turn, black leftists, looking for an audience that would provide them some access to corridors of influence in this society, seek to peddle their liberal and reformist wares in Farrakhan's shadow. Thus Dyson extols Farrakhan's 1995 Million Man March as "a dramatic testament to the magnitude of black male hunger for racial rescue and moral requirement."

Despite the just outrage at racist America felt by many in attendance, the Million Man March was a reactionary, woman-hating mobilization for "atonement," which forgave the oppressors and exploiters for their enormous crimes against black people, working people and the poor, while blaming the oppressed for their oppression. In an article in the *Black Scholar* (Winter/Spring 1996) titled "Million Man March Appeases Racist Exploiters" (reprinted in *WV* No. 647, 7 June 1996), Bay Area Spartacist spokesman and Labor Black League member Don Cane wrote:

> "In the 1960s, 'I'm Black and I'm Proud' race consciousness, influenced by masses in struggle, was defiant of the racist capitalist rulers. Today we witness 'I'm black and I'm not a criminal' race consciousness influenced by a desperate black middle class begging for 'understanding' from the racist rulers. The black misleaders, branded by race themselves, can barely conceal their contempt for the black masses on whom they call to 'atone.' I say ***black people have nothing to atone for!*** But the false prophets of the 'American Dream' blame the victim for not 'succeeding' and degrade the proud history of black working people who have struggled long and hard for freedom from the chains of racist oppression."

Columbia University professor Manning Marable, a leading figure in the social-democratic Committees of Correspondence, opposed the Million Man March at the time. But in "The Politics of Hip Hop" (*Along the Color Line*, March 2002), Marable complains of the refusal of "the liberal integrationist, middle class black establishment" to "engage in a constructive political dialogue with the hip hop nation" and enthuses over the NOI:

> "The Nation of Islam has understood for decades that black culture is directly related to black politics. To transform an oppressed community's political behavior, one must first begin with the reconstruction of both cultural and civic imagination."

It *is* an indictment of the "black establishment" that they have written off a generation of black youth. But here Marable retails the discredited notions of the '60s cultural nationalists. "Black art initiates, supports and promotes change," wrote Ron Karenga in 1967, for whom this was an explicit renunciation of the need for the economic and political liberation of blacks. In a retort applying equally well to Marable today, black scholar Robert Allen exposed the real

Wide World

Leroi Jones (Amiri Baraka), 1967. Reactionary logic of cultural nationalism: Jones built black capitalist political machine and in 1968 colluded with police to quell Newark riots and mobilized followers to break teachers strike.

meaning of this program in *Black Awakening in Capitalist America* (1969):

> "It has allowed a passive retreat into 'blackness' on the part of some of those who call themselves revolutionaries. These so-called black revolutionaries measure their militancy by how much 'black awareness' they have or how 'bad' they can talk. Verbal militance thus replaces action, and the net result is passive nonresistance to oppression."

Farrakhan's alternative to the fraud of liberal integrationism is to peddle segregationist bigotry so that he and his coterie of like-minded petty-bourgeois followers can gain the exclusive "right" to exploit the ghetto for themselves. The "self-respect" he offers is the misogyny of a husband forcing his wife to walk ten feet behind him, and his "race pride" comes in the form of vindictive denunciations of Jewish, Arab and Asian shopkeepers as "bloodsuckers."

The idea of "black capitalism"—predicated on the possibility of consolidating a significant black bourgeoisie in racist America—is both reactionary and utopian. But it expresses the outlook of that small layer of black entrepreneurs like Russell Simmons of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network (HSAN), who have "made it." The glorification of criminality not infrequently promoted in Simmons' productions is but the flip side of Farrakhan's appeals for "atonement"—both accept the racist stereotype of the ghetto poor as a criminal underclass. "Many people who are racist don't even know it. Part of our struggle is to take our advantage of that—move that racism around, use it for your business, your objectives," exhorts Simmons in a 2002 interview with Marable. This attitude parallels what Ishmael Reed observed among some Bay Area rappers who "come across as cynical, amoral capitalists who know what turns on their white suburban audience. This audience seems to need their 'n-----' fix" (*Los Angeles Times*, 3 February 2002).

Black Oppression and the Bankruptcy of Liberalism

Marable's real perspective is Democratic Party pressure politics. Thus, he applauds "respected rappers" who "emphasized the need to mobilize artists around progressive goals, such as supporting voter education and registration campaigns." In fact, Marable sits on the board of HSAN, itself nothing other than a vehicle to hustle the "hip-hop generation" vote for the Democratic Party. HSAN works closely with bourgeois politicians like presidential hopeful Al Sharpton, who has sought at every opportunity to channel ghetto anger against cop and fascist terror into the confines of bourgeois electoralism.

Kelley also partakes of the mood of defeat in promoting the use of the "N" word in hip-hop music, justifying this with the grotesque implication that the use of the word is actually an expression of class consciousness. Kelley argues that the use of the "N" word in hip-hop "speaks to a collective identity shaped by class consciousness, the character of inner-city space, police repression, poverty, and the constant threat of intraracial violence." He concludes:

> "In fact, N---a is frequently employed to distinguish urban black working-class males from the black bourgeoisie and African Americans in positions of institutional authority. Their point is simple: the experiences of young black men in the inner city are not universal to all black people, and, in fact, they recognize that some African Americans play a role in perpetuating their oppression.... By linking their identity to the 'hood' instead of simply skin color, gangsta rappers implicitly acknowledge the limitations of racial politics."

However, the "N" word does not denote the wage slaves of the working class, but the chattel slaves of the old South. Black working-class males (and females) who identify with the word objectively deny their historic class interests and social power as *workers* and will never transcend "the limitations of racial politics." Far from being a sign of a subversive assault on the language of oppression, the pervasive use of the slave masters' epithet by black youth reflects a

Reuters

HSAN founder Russell Simmons (second from right) and rapper Sean "P. Diddy" Combs (far right) alongside Democratic Party politicians at NYC protest against Rockefeller drug laws. Black nationalists, liberals view hip-hop as vehicle to mobilize the youth vote for capitalist candidates.

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
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profound, if unconscious, demoralization and self-hatred, an internalization of the demeaning view of black people propagated by the capitalist rulers and the mass media. Its use represents a ***retreat*** from the fight against racism and within the working class can only offend and divide.

Oppression oppresses—when not combatted, it is internalized and re-directed against others among the oppressed. Motown groups like the Temptations could at least sing about when "there's plenty of work and the bosses are paying" in 1965's "Since I Lost My Baby." Rap can sometimes capture the misery of life in racist America, but all too much of it also glorifies backward lumpen consciousness. Retrograde language and the social attitudes it betrays not only are an expression of the reactionary ideology with which the ruling class justifies the all-sided oppression endemic to capitalist class society, whether of black people, women, gays or immigrants, but also reinforces that oppression. This finds expression not only in the widespread use of the "N" word but also in anti-gay and anti-woman bigotry. Hip-hop albums are littered with songs—from Jay-Z's "Big Pimpin'" to Ludacris's "Move Bitch"—referring to women in the most vilely derogatory and misogynous terms.

Black working-class women are triply oppressed under American capitalism, often relegated to the lowest-paying jobs with little opportunity for advancement and demonized by the racist rulers as "welfare cheats" and "irresponsible" unwed mothers. Perhaps the most extreme form of capitalism's exploitation and degradation of women is prostitution. So it is symptomatic of his acceptance of the inviolability of the rule of capital that Kelley argues in *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!* (1997) that a prostitute is "resisting what would otherwise be her fate in an increasingly service-oriented, low-wage economy with shrinking opportunities for working-class ghetto residents." Only in a planned economy under a workers government can women be freed from the isolation and drudgery of the family as well as its accompaniment—sex as a commodity. Won to the communist program, black women will be in the forefront of the struggle against all aspects of capitalist oppression.

The grotesque notion that "reclamation" of the "N" word ameliorates racial oppression speaks to the political bankruptcy of the liberal program of many of the prominent black intellectuals like Dyson and Kelley. They can offer no way forward, only idealistic moralism, and it comes at the cost of disarming black youth confronted by a vicious, hostile society. Comparing such types to Booker T. Washington, a black apologist for Jim Crow and accommodation to the racist status quo in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, one comrade observed in our pre-conference discussion: "These latter-day Booker T.'s have no solution to black oppression so instead they are reduced to seeking their bona fides by defending the 'flexible' use of the word, which inflexibly denotes a people relegated to second-class status." As the comrade stressed, "For us the fight for black liberation is key to proletarian revolution in the U.S. All our comrades are women's liberationists and all our comrades are black liberationists."

American Workers Revolution Needs Black Leadership!

The overwhelming feeling of powerlessness that weighs down on ghetto youth stems not mainly from the absence of objective opportunities for social struggle but especially from the betrayal of struggle by self-proclaimed black leaders and the existing trade-union leadership, whose first loyalty is to the capitalist profit system. The refusal of the misleaders of organized labor to wage any struggle on behalf of the ghetto and barrio poor has contributed not only to the increased destitution and despair in the inner cities but also to the devastation of the trade unions.

Today, the conditions of life for working people are under increasing assault as the result of a contracting economy and the post-9/11 drive for "national unity." The situation cries out for a class-struggle fight for ***all*** workers and the poor—for free, quality, integrated education, for decent medical care and housing, for jobs for all. Despite the hardening of segregation in American society and the erosion of union strength over the last two decades, black workers remain integrated into strategic sectors of the industrial proletariat, including in such basic services as health care, urban transit and longshore. But to mobilize that social power in a struggle to break the material chains of exploitation and oppression requires a political struggle to break the ideological chains that bind labor and minorities to the agencies of the capitalist oppressor, chiefly the Democratic Party. As comrade Cane said in a presentation to the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club last year:

> "If we are to be the best defenders of the ghetto poor, the best fighters against the prevailing conditions grinding down a generation of black youth, we must face reality squarely and combat every aspect of lumpen culture that retards forward movement of the working class. The black question is the decisive question facing the American workers revolution—the black ghetto cannot be separated out from it. Our party must sink deep roots into the working class and develop a communist worker cadre. Through the black component of this worker cadre we seek to organize and lead the ghetto masses in a forward march against the main enemy—the capitalist exploiters. The task of revolutionary activity is to rally the broad mass of society, the widest layers, around the only revolutionary class, the working class. And by doing so isolate the capitalists, expose them as social parasites, challenge their position of power and finally remove them from the same."

The October Revolution of 1917, led by the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, was the greatest act of social liberation in all history. In placing the multinational working class of Russia in power, it opened the door to the emancipation of women, the many oppressed nationalities and the long-suffering Jewish people. In doing so, it served as a beacon to the exploited and oppressed around the world. "Everything new on the Negro question came from Moscow," wrote American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon, "after the Russian Revolution began to thunder its demand throughout the world for freedom and equality for all national minorities, all subject peoples and all races—for all the despised and rejected of the earth."

To lead that revolution to fruition, the Bolsheviks had to forge a party free of any manifestation of the backwardness and bigotry infecting the proletariat. Following the revolution, the workers government could begin to lift the entire population out of the material poverty and corresponding cultural mire brought on by the old order of reaction and oppression. Unlike in the former Russian tsarist empire, a prison house of nations into which non-Russian nationalities were forcibly assimilated, in the U.S. the segregation of black people greases the wheels for the enslavement of the proletariat as a whole. America is a racist nightmare for black people, to which the sordid history of the "N" word is testament.

WV Photo

During 1999 U.S. imperialist bombing of Serbia, integrated Newport News, Virginia shipyard workers shut down production of aircraft carriers.

WV Photo

October 1999: Trade unionists were backbone of our NYC mobilization to stop KKK race-terrorists, giving taste of social power needed to shatter capitalist system of exploitation and racist oppression.

But the racial barriers erected by the capitalist rulers to keep black people "in their place" and to divide black and white workers can be surmounted—in the course of class struggle. In the mass united-front anti-Klan mobilizations we have built over the years drawing on the social power of the trade unions, we have sought to bring to life the connection between labor's fight and the fight for black freedom. When some ten thousand trade unionists, youth, black people and other minorities came out to ride the KKK race-terrorists out of New York City in October 1999, it was a powerful display of the social power of the working class standing at the head of all the oppressed.

We seek to build a Bolshevik party in the United States—a multiracial party that fights for the liberation of the proletariat and all the oppressed. Black workers, specially oppressed in racist America and correspondingly harboring fewer illusions in bourgeois "democracy," will play a central role in this vanguard party and serve to link the anger of the downtrodden ghetto masses to the cause of the proletariat. Only a party of the Bolshevik type can lead the working class to power, smashing the social basis for racial oppression and ushering in a world in which the "N" word and all the other legacies of slavery are consigned to the scrap heap of history. As we wrote in the International Communist League "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998): "The victory of the proletariat on a world scale would place unimagined material abundance at the service of human needs, lay the basis for the elimination of classes and the eradication of social inequality based on sex and the very abolition of the social significance of race, nation and ethnicity." ■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

BAY AREA

Meet the Marxists
Thursday, August 21, 7 p.m.
Café Strada (corner of College Avenue and Bancroft Way), UC Berkeley
Information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

BOSTON

Saturday, 3:30 p.m.
August 9: **For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**
Harvard University, Loker Common
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

ICL Web Site: www.icl-fi.org

CHICAGO

Saturday, 5 p.m.
August 9: **The Revolution Betrayed: What Happened to the Soviet Union**
222 S. Morgan, ring buzzer #23
(Blue Line, UIC-Halsted stop)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

TORONTO

Saturday, 2 p.m.
August 2: **Marxism vs. Anarchism—For a Revolutionary Workers Party! Independence for Quebec!**
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Room 2286
252 Bloor St. West (above St George Station)
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

Iran...

(continued from page 5)

imperialism, has been destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution, throwing back the consciousness and struggles of the working class and oppressed internationally. This effect is magnified in Iran, where Islamic terror physically annihilated the left.

If their struggles are to go forward, the most farsighted elements among today's young Iranian activists must assimilate the bitter lessons of the 1979 "revolution," including the betrayals of a whole host of leftist organizations in Iran and internationally.

In an article in *International Socialist Review* (August-September 2000), the International Socialist Organization (ISO) writes: "The failure of the left was also crucial in allowing Khomeini's forces to take power. The workers and the left could have challenged both the Shah's regime and the mullahs' leadership based on the power of the workers' strike committees. But their political strategy made this impossible.... Much of the left subordinated workers' interests to building a coalition with the clergy and liberals who were hostile to the working class. They argued that the main task was to maintain unity in the movement in order to get rid of the Shah's dictatorship."

The ISO's analysis is both correct and utterly cynical. The fake left in Iran and internationally—including the ISO—promoted the mullah-led reactionary movement, whose most prominent slogans were "God is great!" and "Death or the veil!" They dismissed the emancipation of women, along with every other revolutionary perspective, because they all, to a greater or lesser extent, ***liquidated into the reactionary Islamic mobilization***, putting forward justifications such as "anti-imperialism" or claims that the "mass movement" encompassed a "revolution within a revolution" through which the "progressive" forces could "later" come to power!

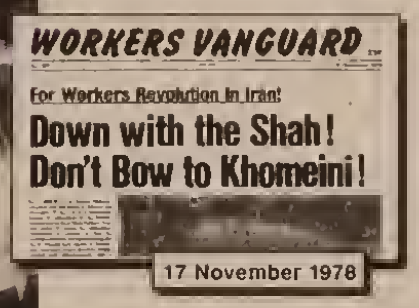
WV Photo

January 1989 NYC protest called by Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee against mass executions in Iran.

The January 1979 issue of the ISO's *Socialist Worker* unabashedly hailed Khomeini's "mass movement" which aimed to enslave women and throw back social progress centuries, headlining one article: "The Form—Religious, the Spirit—Revolution!" In this, they were far from unique. Today, an editorial in the *Militant* (7 July), newspaper of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), squirms: "Some of the *Militant*'s past coverage may have also conveyed the impression that the current Iranian regime, in a warped form, is a defender of the remaining gains of the revolution." Wonder why! The SWP has touted the Tehran regime's "gains" for years. When the mullahs came to power, the SWP, then associated with the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec), ran the banner headline: "Victory in Iran!" (*Militant*, 23 February 1979), and declared some months later that "women are freer than ever before in Iran" (*Militant*, 14 December 1979)! Meanwhile, European USec leader Brian Grogan boasted of chanting "God is great!" in the streets of Tehran.

L'Express

Victims of Islamic regime's terror are hanged in Tehran, July 1980. We uniquely fought to mobilize proletariat against both Shah and Khomeini's forces.


WORKERS VANGUARD
For Workers Revolution in Iran!
Down with the Shah!
Don't Bow to Khomeini!
17 November 1978

It was the betrayals of the left that ensured that the workers did not challenge *both* the Shah and the mullah leadership. The Shah's brutal regime remained in power solely through naked terror and the backing of American imperialism. Its days were numbered; the only question was, what would replace it—workers rule or Islamic reaction. It was powerful proletarian struggle, such as a sit-down strike by 37,000 oil workers, that led to the toppling of the tyrannical Shah. We stressed at the time:

> "The hundreds of thousands who are now marching behind the mullahs are by no means all Muslim fundamentalists. Many are primarily motivated by hostility to the real crimes of the shah. Many leftist workers have probably joined what they view as a potentially successful opposition to the hated regime. But the masses, particularly the workers, who are now supporting the Khomeinis and the Shariatmadaris can and must be won away from the present Islamic reactionary offensive in favor of a *social revolutionary* opposition to the shah."
>
> —"Iran in Turmoil" *WV* No. 215, 22 September 1978

As it does today, Iran in 1978-79 exemplified the Marxist conception of combined and uneven development. Alongside a sizable, militant and strategic industrial proletariat, particularly in the oil industry, were thousands of rural villages and impoverished urban shantytowns under the sway of the Shi'ite clerical caste. A chauvinist "prison house of peoples," Iran oppressed non-Persian nationalities like the Kurds and Arabs, who together make up nearly half the population. At the very bottom of the social ladder were millions of hideously oppressed peasant women. In these respects Iran resembled the tsarist empire on the eve of the Russian Revolution of 1917. But it lacked a revolutionary leadership like the Russian Bolsheviks, acting as a tribune of all the people in the struggle to lead the working class to the conquest of state power.

All wings of the bourgeoisie in Iran and other countries of belated capitalist development are too backward and dependent on imperialism to play any progressive role. Only the proletariat leading the urban plebeian and peasant masses can lead a struggle for liberation from imperialist subjugation and reactionary traditionalism. In seizing state power and establishing their own rule, the workers will be compelled to institute socialist measures, expropriating the means of production and establishing a planned economy. At the same time, a victorious workers revolution in Iran would be immediately besieged by the imperialist powers. It could only survive and flourish by being extended internationally, not only throughout the Near East, but most crucially to the advanced imperialist powers of West Europe, North America and Japan.

The "Islamic revolution" of 1979 represented a negative confirmation of Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky's concept of permanent revolution. In countries like Iran, whose economic and social development has been retarded by imperialist enslavement, the historic tasks posed by the bourgeois revolutions of West Europe and North America remain on the agenda: equality for women, freedom for national minorities, agrarian revolution, social and economic modernization. From this, many self-styled leftists draw the utterly false conclusion that there must be a "two-stage revolution," with the first stage led by "anti-imperialist" elements of the bourgeoisie and limited to "democratic" capitalist rule. For much of the Iranian left, "anti-imperialism" meant unity between the working and oppressed masses and the "progressive" (and not so progressive) elements of the bourgeoisie. The outcome of this schema is that the "second stage" invariably means not the ascent of the workers but the massacre of communists and trade unionists, as happened in Iran. (See "Iran 1979: Proletarian Revolution or Islamic Reaction," *WV* No. 784, 12 July 2002.)

As we wrote in our "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program":

> "The 1979 'Iranian Revolution' opened up a period of ascendant political Islam in the historically Muslim world, a development which contributed to and was powerfully reinforced by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. Khomeini's seizure and consolidation of power in Iran was a defeat akin to Hitler's crushing of the German proletariat in 1933, albeit on a narrower, regional scale. The international Spartacist tendency's slogan 'Down with the Shah! No support to the mullahs!' and our focus on the woman question ('No to the veil!') stood in sharp contrast to the rest of the left's capitulation to mullah-led reaction."
>
> —*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998

Washington's current war on "Islamic terror" was preceded by decades of support to Islamic terror in the name of the war against "godless communism." Osama bin Laden and his fellow *mujahedin* are creatures of U.S. imperialism. Faced with a U.S.-backed Islamic insurgency on its southern flank in Afghanistan, in late 1979 the Soviet Red Army intervened on the side of the left-nationalist Kabul government that had tried to implement such reforms as lowering the bride price and setting up literacy programs for girls. We Trotskyists proclaimed: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and called to extend the gains of the Soviet October Revolution to the peoples of Afghanistan. But rather than fighting to win, the treacherous Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy withdrew its forces from Afghanistan in 1988-89 to appease the U.S. imperialists, directly paving the way for the victory of Washington's Muslim fanatics and opening the door to capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR itself.

WCPI Calls for "Dialogue" with Monarchists

Today, the mullah regime in Tehran is widely despised, and the question of who will rule Iran could soon be posed again. Faced with broad unrest, the regime has fractured between hard-liners around Ayatollah Ali Khameini, Khomeini's successor as the Islamic "supreme leader," and "reformers" around President Mohammed Khatami. The latter was first installed in office six years ago as a pressure valve to contain discontent. But popular illusions that Khatami would institute significant reforms have dissipated, as he works alongside the hard-liners to suppress discontent and enforce the stifling restrictions on social life. A spokesman for the main reform student group, the Office for Consolidating Unity (OCU), told *Middle East Report Online* (15 July):

> "Previously, the students distinguished between the reformers in government, whom the students helped to elect and with whom they shared many concerns, and the hardliners, whom they had not elected and who were intent on maintaining their authoritarian grip on power....
>
> "At a minimum, we want to ensure civil and social rights and liberties, and we want a democracy. But the students have lost any illusion that working for reforms within the system can bring this about."

But if Iranian student activists have lost their illusions in the Islamic "reformers," there are from all evidence widespread illusions that an idealized form of Western bourgeois democracy can provide an answer. Some look back to the bourgeois-nationalist Mossadeq regime in the early 1950s, which was propped up by the Tudeh Stalinists, who channeled a working-class upheaval against

Asparagirl

New York City, July 9: Pro-imperialist monarchist forces were prevalent at recent demonstrations in the U.S. against the Islamic regime in Iran.

the Shah and the imperialists into support for the "progressive" Mossadeq. But Mossadeq called on the army generals, who were working with the U.S. to bring him down, to crack down on Tudeh. The army, in league with Mossadeq's former Islamic allies, then brought him down (see "Near East, 1950s: Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism," Part Two, *WV* No. 741, 8 September 2000). If the Mossadeq interlude demonstrates anything, it is that in a country like Iran, whose economic and social development has been stunted by imperialism, there can be no stable bourgeois democracy; under capitalism, Iran can never look like Western Europe or North America. Only workers rule can begin to lift Iran from its economic and social backwardness.

Today the fraying of illusions in Islamic "reformers" has provided an opening for the monarchists around Reza Pahlavi, exiled son of the former Shah, to sharply increase their activities toward and in Iran. These monarchists are based among the hundreds of thousands of mainly right-wing Iranian exiles in Southern California. Their Farsi-language satellite TV stations and Web sites are a major source of information for many Iranians, given the widespread media censorship within the country. But these pro-U.S. royalists face major obstacles to winning widespread support in Iran. Iranians can look next door to Iraq and Afghanistan to see that the real face of Washington's vaunted "democracy" is naked colonial brutality. And memories of the CIA-organized coup that overthrew Mossadeq in 1953 run deep. In his *Middle East Report Online* interview, the OCU student leader commented, "For the students, at least, a monarchist alternative is taken as an insult.... Why should they go back to a monarchy, even a constitutional one, where a hereditary sultan is set to rule over them as subjects?"

Yet the Worker-Communist Party of Iran (WCPI), which appears to be the largest and most influential force among the Iranian left today, openly seeks to accommodate such monarchist forces. The WCPI rightly denounces any idea of allying with any wing of the current regime, and is also unique on the Iranian left in its emphasis on women's rights, including forthright opposition to the veil. However, the WCPI accommodates prevalent social conservatism; while, for example, saying that the decision to have an abortion rests with women alone, the WCPI nevertheless calls for state counseling to dissuade women from the procedure. And far from upholding a perspective of proletarian class independence, the WCPI are in fact anti-clerical reformists who foster terrible illusions in "democratic" Western imperialism.

For years, one of the WCPI's main campaigns has been for imperialist governments in Europe and Canada to shut down the Iranian embassies in their countries. By raising this demand, the WCPI lends credence to the democratic pretensions of these imperialists and calls on them to act as cops of the world. The WCPI has also repeatedly called on the United Nations to intervene on behalf of the oppressed in the Near East. Its sister group in Iraq is currently agitating for a UN military intervention in that country, calling for the U.S. and British forces to be replaced by "the intervention of the United Nations" to "safeguard free and secure conditions" (*WPI Briefing*, 28 April). As was shown by its decade-long starvation embargo of Iraq, which killed at least a million and a half men, women and children, the UN is nothing more than an instrument for upholding the imperialist status quo against the oppressed masses of the underdeveloped "Third World."

The WCPI's grotesque accommodation to the Iranian monarchists was clearly seen at a 4,000-strong rally in support of Iranian students in Toronto on June 9, which featured a sea of monarchist and Iranian national flags interspersed with WCPI banners and placards. A WCPI representative spoke from the official platform and, far from even criticizing

Worker-Communist Party of Iran

Tehran, March 8: Demonstrators defy Islamic regime by openly celebrating International Women's Day (top). In 1979, tens of thousands marched against reimposition of the veil in first mass challenge to Islamic rule.

UPI

the monarchists, the WCPI's own statement for the event, titled "Resolution in Solidarity with the People's Struggle to Overthrow the Islamic Regime of Iran," avoided all mention of these royalists or of U.S. imperialism. For the occasion, the WCPI even dropped the last part of its customary slogan, "Freedom, Equality, Workers Rule," as its banners in Farsi and English solely called for "Freedom, Equality!"

This transparent opportunism aimed at accommodating deeply reactionary forces is no accident. Two years ago, in an interview in *International Haftegi* (10 August 2001, summarized in English on the WCPI's Web site), WCPI founder-leader Mansoor Hekmat (since deceased) characterized the WCPI and "the pro-West nationalist current which has primarily gathered around Reza Pahlavi" as the "two main currents in the opposition demanding the ouster of the regime." While rejecting "unity" with the monarchists, Hekmat continued:

> "What can be done is to establish an official dialogue among the opposition currents demanding the regime's overthrow. We do not have a problem with this. We invited all the opposition, from Left to Right, to our Third Congress. Not only do we not have a problem with setting up an official dialogue with any organisation opposing the Islamic Republic, we welcome it and think it necessary."

The forces around Reza Pahlavi are the literal heirs of the bloody Shah and his henchmen who butchered Iranian workers, leftists and minorities by the thousands. In the late 1970s, the Iranian left allied with Islamic reaction against the hated Shah, with horrific results; now the WCPI wants a "dialogue" with the Shah's forces against the Islamic regime! Such a perspective expresses profound political bankruptcy. It would prove literally suicidal for a new generation of Iranian leftists.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Iran today is in the throes of a profound social crisis. The only road to genuine social emancipation, to freeing Iranian women from enslavement, to winning national self-determination for the Kurds and other oppressed nationalities, lies through the smashing of capitalist class rule. An Iranian workers revolution would send shock waves throughout the Near East, showing a way forward for the beleaguered masses who chafe under the grip of Islamic theocracies, military dictatorships and bloody imperialist overlordship. It would act as a spur to struggle, as well, for working people in the United States and throughout the imperialist world, who must be won to the perspective of proletarian opposition to their "own" ruling classes.

In the countries of the East, the question of women's oppression is one of the most powerful motor forces of socialist revolution. Indeed, when the Bolsheviks arrived in Central Asia in the years following the October Revolution, it was among women that they found the main point of support for their program and won their key cadres. The same holds true for Iran. A Leninist-Trotskyist party, championing women's rights against the age-old stranglehold of religion and the family, will find its most loyal and courageous fighters among women.

In the wake of the mullahs' rise to power, we held forums across the U.S. under the title "No to the Veil! Down With Khomeini! For a Workers Revolution in Iran!" Defying attempts by Iranian Muslims and pro-Khomeini leftists to violently disrupt these meetings, the speaker, a Near Eastern Trotskyist of Muslim origin, told the simple truth that the veil is a prison, "a symbol of women's oppression under Islam and an instrument of that control" ("Fatima Khalil Tells the Truth on Iran," *WV* No. 230, 27 April 1979).

The emancipation of women not only from the veil but from the daily drudgery of hearth and home will only come about when the proletariat conquers state power and establishes a socialist society, which will lay the material basis for the replacement of the institution of the family through collective childcare, kitchens and other social institutions. As we wrote in *Women and Revolution* (No. 18, Spring 1979) following the first challenge to mullah rule in 1979, with the outpouring of 100,000 women in Tehran on International Women's Day:

> "The Iranian masses today urgently need an independent, working-class revolutionary party, capable of struggling in its own name against the reactionary social program of the mullahs. In this task, the question of women's oppression will play a major role. We salute the masses of outraged women who took to the streets in defiance of Khomeini, in defiance of 1,300 years of brutal institutionalized repression, in defiance of those 'leftists' who hail as liberators the clerical reactionaries who would keep women gagged, locked away and enslaved from birth to death. But unless the defiant women find a programmatic base of support in a class-conscious proletarian opposition to the mullahs, their militancy will be dissipated or smashed by the clerical reaction.... Only the perspective of a new, socialist order can show the way forward for the militant women. It is as cadres of a vanguard party of the Iranian working class, armed with the fighting program of revolutionary Trotskyism, that the courageous women of Iran will win their liberation and the liberation of all the exploited and oppressed." ■

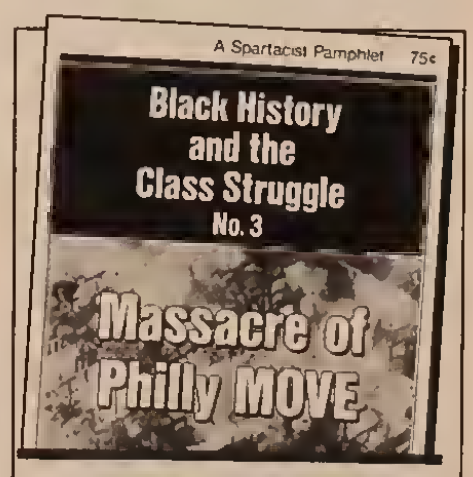
MOVE...

(continued from page 3)

anti-technological worldview of MOVE was very distant from our Marxist politics, we always aspired to the Leninist model of the revolutionary workers party championing the cause of all the oppressed. As Lenin said more than one hundred years ago in his classic book *What Is To Be Done?*, a working-class party's ideal "should not be the trade-union secretary, but the ***tribune of the people*** who is able to react to any manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single vision of police violence and capitalist exploitation." As we said at the time, "This atrocity must never be forgotten! Ramona Africa (the sole adult MOVE survivor) and all the MOVE prisoners must be set free! Solidarity with the martyrs is an elementary reflex of human dignity, not to mention socialist morality" (*WV* No. 384, 26 July 1985).

During their now quarter century of hard time in the overcrowded, racist prison complex in Pennsylvania, the MOVE 9 have routinely had their legal attempts at redress summarily turned down by state courts. On February 20 last year, the MOVE defendants filed a petition for Allowance of Appeal before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. But as a MOVE 9 statement declared, "there is no justice in the courts for MOVE."

We continue in our efforts to sear into the memory of the workers movement the racist atrocities visited upon MOVE and its supporters. The Partisan Defense Committee sends monthly stipends to Debbie Africa, Janine Africa, Janet Africa, Chuck Africa, Eddie Africa, Phil Africa, Delbert Africa and Mike Africa. We do not forget that Merle Africa died in prison in 1998 having spent nearly two decades in the racist dungeons of Pennsylvania. We have championed the cause of freedom for America's foremost political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal. Free the MOVE 9! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! ■



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Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

was inspected, either before or in the immediate aftermath of the war, and contained not a whisper of evidence of such weapons. During the war itself, there were frequent claims to have offed Saddam as well as tales of the "heroic" rescue of Private Jessica Lynch who was, in fact, voluntarily turned over by medical personnel in the hospital where she was being well treated. When Iraqi citizens previously attempted to return her, they were driven off by American troops.

The Bush regime has not been loath to employ the whip in an effort to quiet the rising dissent against the war. Most recently, two soldiers from the Army's 3rd Infantry Division are being considered for discipline for having voiced their discontent with Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld in a TV interview. The White House has and continues to accuse its bourgeois critics of giving comfort to the enemy and has, evidently, alienated the entire CIA by attempting to foist blame for Bush's lie that Iraq was attempting to obtain uranium on the spy agency. But the Bush administration is obviously in a lather. In testimony to its increasing "sensitivity" to the rising dissatisfaction, soon after the "traitorous" interview, the 3rd Infantry Division received the news that it would be rotated back to the States.

In an effort to avoid any fallout against Bush, the administration first offered CIA top George Tenet as a scapegoat. Tenet initially took full responsibility for the "mistake," subsequently telling all who would listen that he, in fact, had informed the administration that the intelligence was phony. Not accidentally, an op-ed piece by Joseph Wilson, former U.S. ambassador to Gabon, appeared in the *New York Times* (6 July). Wilson revealed that in early 2002 he had been sent by the CIA, at the behest of Cheney, to Niger in an effort to verify Saddam's attempt to obtain yellow-cake uranium. Upon his return Wilson informed both the CIA and the State Department that there was no such attempt, reiterating this after Bush's State of the Union address. Bush has since offered up another administration lackey, deputy national security adviser Stephen Hadley, as the one responsible for failing to inform him that the intelligence was based on a known forgery. More evasions and fall guys are likely to follow.

Bush is sweating, but for the most part the Democratic opposition in the House and Senate continues to be terrified by the prospect of confronting the still popular president, especially on the war and occupation. Those who have voiced criticisms, notably Democratic presidential candidates Bob Graham and Vermont governor Howard Dean, accuse Bush of neglecting domestic security and ignoring the "real" threat posed by North Korea's nuclear capacity. This is a frank proposal to take a further step toward a police state here and to prepare for an attack against the North Korean bureaucratically deformed workers state.

AP

June 30: Iraqi oil workers protest in Baghdad demanding jobs.

The Democrats' incredulous cries that they were duped by Bush into supporting the war are nothing short of breathtaking. From the alleged Al Qaeda link to the Niger uranium scam and everything else, the administration's lies were transparent and exposed as such. It didn't take any inside sources to know that; we communists knew it and *Workers Vanguard* told the truth. But the Democrats embraced Bush's war because they are, after all, the other party of racist U.S. imperialism.

Indeed, it is the liberal black Democrats who were most prone to mouthing opposition to "Bush's war" in Iraq who are today in the forefront of screaming for racist U.S. imperialism to intervene militarily in war-torn Liberia. While Jesse Jackson Sr. laments that "we are turning our backs on Liberia," presidential hopeful Al Sharpton rushed off to negotiations in Ghana to prepare the ground for the Pentagon. While pleading "humanitarian" intentions, such efforts in fact serve U.S. imperialism's current plans to extend its military presence all over the planet, including a string of bases across the African continent. ***U.S. hands off Liberia!***

CNN

1983: Donald Rumsfeld, architect of murderous colonial war on Iraq, greets Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on behalf of Reagan administration.

To date the not-so-left in this country has charted a fight-the-right (i.e., elect the Democrats) agenda supplemented by the not very daring call in a recent "Win Without War" coalition ad for an independent commission to determine the truth about U.S. intelligence on Iraq. The ad ends in the following whimper, "It would be a tragedy if young men and women were sent to die for a lie." This is merely an extension of the class-collaborationist mobilizations sponsored by the more left-wing antiwar coalitions—like Workers World Party's International ANSWER—that provided a platform for those "decent" imperialists who opposed *this* war. The big lie here is that the working class and its sons and daughters share any common cause with America's imperialist rulers.

As soon as the invasion started, even the handful of Democrats who spoke out against the war immediately rallied in support of "our troops." By this they meant support for their imperialist army of occupation, which slaughtered thousands of Iraqis in this war on top of the 1.5 million killed by the 12 years of UN sanctions. And the reformists and pacifists who looked to these Democratic politicians simply abandoned the field. We intervened into the mass antiwar protests internationally to fight for military defense of Iraq—without any political support to the Saddam Hussein regime—and for class struggle against the imperialist rulers at home. As we said in the call for a Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent in an antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C. last October: "Unless the struggle against imperialist war is based on opposition to all parties and agencies of capitalist rule, it will be used by the bourgeois liberals to channel discontent back into the very capitalist system that breeds war. ***Break with the Democratic Party of war and racism! Build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution!***"

Big Lies and Imperialist War

Lies in the service of military aggression are hardly unusual. When used to justify the actions of the imperialists against qualitatively weaker forces, these must usually be even more fantastic and grotesque. With the emergence of American imperialism on the world stage, during the regime of Republican president McKinley, the Hearst press in 1898 created the *casus belli* of "Remember the Maine!"—a ship it claimed was sunk in Havana harbor by the Spanish overlords of Cuba (when it is well-established that the explosion was caused by faulty construction design). The subsequent U.S. invasion, supposedly in the service of liberating Cuba, was in reality aimed at asserting America's "right," as against the "right" of Spain, to control that country, a "right" the U.S. imperialists asserted as well in the Philippines.

In more recent memory, the 1965 Gulf of Tonkin "incident," in which a supposedly brutal North Vietnamese naval assault on a U.S. warship was fabricated out of whole cloth, provided the pretext for a massive escalation in U.S. bombing and ground forces in Vietnam. This was carried out under the leadership of Democratic president Lyndon B. Johnson—whose domestic agenda has, with some justice, been described as "progressive"—and virtually every one of the Democrats who would later be prominent fixtures on reformist antiwar platforms voted for the 1965 war resolution. Portrayed by the American imperialists as a war for democracy, this was in fact a counterrevolutionary war to suppress the struggle of the Vietnamese workers and peasants both against colonial domination and for social revolution. Happily, that war ended in a defeat for U.S. imperialism that, for a period, demonstrated to many Americans that this country is neither good nor omnipotent, and stayed the hands of the American capitalist rulers from embarking on further military adventures.

It is said that whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad. Here Bush has a considerable head start. The latest evidence of this is a scheme hatched by Contragate ex-con John Poindexter—head of the Pentagon unit that earlier proposed a "Total Information Awareness" program to spy on the whole population—to set up a "futures market" trading in prospects for terrorist attacks (a sort of a Wall Street lottery betting on another World Trade Center attack!).

More generally, Bush and his cohorts have simply proposed that "America the Good" will politically dominate planet Earth, where necessary by the use of military force and if necessary in the absence of allies. This is quite mad and deadly dangerous even as a fantasy. Even Hitler had the assistance of Mussolini. To be sure, the motor force that drives such aspirations is not insanity but the *raison d'être* of the capitalist system of exploitation which is based on the quest for profits and the power necessary to assure that these profits are realized. This quest has, with the overturn of the degenerated workers state in the USSR in 1991-92, intensified exponentially, especially the aspirations of the currently far dominant U.S. imperialists. They are set on a course against their imperialist competitors that, absent socialist revolution, will, as it did twice in the last century, sooner or later result in world war, this time posing the possibility of a nuclear holocaust.

Witness this plan in its beginnings on the backward terrain of Iraq. The ignoble real purpose of the war and subsequent occupation is to plant the American flag in the oil-rich Near East as an assertion of U.S. dominance over all semicolonial countries and imperialist rivals. This baldly imperialist aim has been wrapped in the guise of a crusade to erect a secular, democratic Iraq to serve as a beacon for freedom in the region. This is an opium pipe dream. In a fundamental way there is no "Iraq," a country the boundaries of which were created in the divvying up of the spoils by the British and French imperialist victors in the aftermath of World War I. What exists is the Kurdish North, the Sunni Muslim center and the majority Shi'ite South (and various others), with each region further riven by clan and tribal rivalries.

In such a society the exertion of secular rule under capitalism is only possible under something like Hussein's Ba'athist dictatorship, which Bush & Co. aspire to replicate—democratic rhetoric aside—cleansed of its Ba'athist elements and pliable to U.S. dictates. What does exist among all the peoples of that country is an almost century-long hatred for and resistance to imperialist colonialism. And this just hatred is likely to continue to produce American casualties. In response to the

AP

Racist U.S. military intervention in Somalia, 1992.

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Hands Off NAMBLA! Reinstate Peter Melzer!

Protest Thought Crime Firing of Teacher!

Another blow against the beleaguered group NAMBLA (North American Man/Boy Love Association) was struck recently, as U.S. Court of Appeals judges in Manhattan upheld the Board of Education's firing of Peter Melzer. Melzer was a physics teacher at the Bronx High School of Science for over 30 years; he was fired by the Board of Education in 2000 solely and explicitly because of his membership in NAMBLA, which defends the rights of adults and youth to mutually consensual sexual relations. The decision, made public on July 17, is particularly ominous because no one even pretends that Melzer committed a crime or did anything at all with anyone. Indeed, the court panel declared that the supposed disruption created by Melzer's NAMBLA membership was "great enough to warrant the school's action" (*New York Times*, 18 July).

This opens the way for firing anyone whose opinions are deemed unacceptable. Who's next? It's in the interests of all fighters for free speech, free association and job rights—from unionists to leftists to anybody with the guts to criticize this increasingly repressive society—to defend NAMBLA and demand the reinstatement of Peter Melzer.

We in the Spartacist League have been almost unique in defending this group, an expression of elementary proletarian decency. Back in 1993, when Melzer was being hounded on the streets by sensation-seeking TV journalists whipping up outrage over supposed "pedophile" infiltration of the schools, the leader of Melzer's own union, New York City's United Federation of Teachers, contemptibly joined the witchhunt. The "respectable" gay rights movement has long treated NAMBLA, which was founded in 1978, as a pariah, preferring to let cops march in Gay Pride events while excluding NAMBLA.

The reason for this cowardice is that NAMBLA dares to openly address the explosive issue of sex between adults and young people. The group's Web site states: "We condemn sexual abuse and all forms of coercion," asserting simply: "We support the rights of youth as well as adults to choose the partners with whom they wish to share and enjoy their bodies." Beat poet Allen Ginsberg, quoted on the NAMBLA Web site, said some years ago, "Attacks on NAMBLA stink of politics, witchhunting for profit, humorlessness, vanity, anger and ignorance..., I'm a member of NAMBLA because I love boys too—everybody does, who has a little humanity." Another great American poet of the Civil War era and after, Walt Whitman (often profiled in NAMBLA literature), also celebrated in life and writing many forms of sexuality, including that of youth. Such renowned figures would have no place in today's narrow-minded, censorious, terrorizing public school system—indeed, the likes of Whitman would probably find themselves in jail. And now with public libraries being forced to use "porn filters" (which arbitrarily block just about anything interesting, including information on birth control and sexually transmitted diseases) to get federal funding, it's a wonder anybody gets any education at all.

Another scary development on the thought-police front involves pure fiction. The *New York Times* (18 July) reported that a young man, Brian Dalton, who had been condemned to a total of eleven and a half years in prison in Ohio on multiple child pornography charges, recently had his guilty plea dismissed, on the grounds of ineffective legal assistance, which is a good thing. However, the basic charge he was convicted on is still law, and Dalton could still be tried. Ohio's 1989 child pornography law bans possession of any obscene material involving children—what "material" Dalton possessed was his own personal diary, which was in his own house, and in which he wrote private fantasies about the capture and rape of young children. That these were not published, not circulated, not real, is irrelevant to the state's thought-police. So theoretically

New York Public Library

Portrait of Walt Whitman that appeared in first edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1855).

even a little poetry or a personal drawing that the state decides is "dirty," even if you don't show it to anybody else, can be used to put you away. Brave New World, indeed.

For all this supposed concern to protect children, this government is willfully inflicting massive damage on children, as poverty rates soar and health conditions deteriorate. What does all this anti-sex hysteria do to them? While the government hounds adults who dare to state that children might have sexual inclinations, it seeks to purify youth in the spirit of the scorched earth policy. Millions of dollars are poured into "abstinence only" school curricula, whose message is that the only safe sex is none (unless of course sanctified by god in a nice fundamentalist wedding). And the legal right to abortion is being increasingly gutted. The result, predictably, is that America has far higher rates of teen pregnancy, infant mortality and sexually transmitted disease than any comparable industrial country. Meanwhile, the lethal AIDS epidemic continues worldwide. And who knows how much agony results from socially enforced guilt compounded by ignorance, how much vile witchhunting of gays fosters teen suicide. If you're young and you want sex, you're damned if you do to possible disease, pregnancy and fear of discovery; and damned if you don't to frustrated misery in this lying, hypocritical sex-saturated society.

For us, the only rule that should govern human sexuality, including for youth, is effective, mutual consent, nothing more and nothing less. We oppose all reactionary "age of consent" laws and indeed all governmental attempts to legislate sexuality, including legal discrimination against homosexuals, which continues despite the Supreme Court's recent ruling that knocks anti-sodomy laws off the hooks. We understand that all such laws are an essential prop to the institution of the family, a social prison for women and children in this brutal, puritanical, capitalist society. Our consistent, decades-long defense of NAMBLA and other such beleaguered and unpopular groups is an expression of our socialist, secular and humane vision of a future free of the class-enforced terror and brutality that cripples human potential, including sexuality, today. Government out of the bedrooms! Defend NAMBLA! Reinstate Melzer now!■

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quite successful hit-and-run attacks, the American military forces, increasingly confined to the relative safety of the barracks and increasingly trigger-happy, will effect even greater outrages against a population which has already sustained at least 6,000 civilian deaths in the process of the "liberation" of Iraq. This, in turn, will add to the body count of U.S. soldiers and to even greater atrocities against Iraqi citizens and, in the process, fuel demoralization among U.S. troops sickened by killing innocent civilians.

While Bush et al. may feel omnipotent, the U.S. Army is not equally endowed. In fact its forces are stretched tight as a wire. Almost half of its existing divisions are now stationed in Iraq—aided by some 13,000 British and other troops—and a full two-thirds of all forces are now placed outside the country in violation of the military guideline to keep two divisions at home for every one deployed elsewhere. Similarly, the U.S. economy, now stagnating, has very real limits. The projected costs of the occupation, undoubtedly still underestimated, have drawn the most negative attention even from the right wing of the Republican Party. Even the rabidly "unilateralist" Bush administration has now been driven to courting the despised UN and the "cowardly" leaders of "old" European countries like France and Germany in an effort to solicit assistance in the occupation.

Such assistance will not be easily forthcoming. With world opinion of the bullying U.S. imperialists at a low ebb, India has recently turned down an administration request for 17,000 troops to assist in the occupation, insisting that military support would only be available under UN auspices. Indian leaders were probably not overly impressed with the promise of financial assistance that accompanied the request, as the Bush administration is notorious for reneging on such promises. In the triumphant immediate aftermath of the war the Bush regime made it clear that "old" Europe, owed billions of dollars by Iraq, would not get a penny from its oil riches that the U.S. supposedly needed to rebuild Iraq. In reality, this booty has been allocated to the rather narrow segment of the American ruling class that the graft-ridden Bush administration is beholden to, primarily defense industries like Bechtel and Halliburton and, of course, the oil/energy giants. The lust for these profits is so strong that even ever-loyal Britain has been nudged away from the trough. UN assistance will not be forthcoming precisely unless the countries of "old" Europe are satisfied with a large piece of the oil action.

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Imperialism!

Whether under another Bush term or a Democratic Party alternative, the prospects are not pretty for America's working people and the black and Latino poor—with every indication that more of their sons and daughters will die and that further economic disasters lie ahead. Added to this now is the beginning realization that they were conned into this war. The manifold discontents in this society, building over the decades, could erupt in any direction. What is needed is an upheaval of social struggle centered on the social power of the multiracial proletariat. For such a struggle to go forward to victory against the capitalist ruling class, it is necessary to cut the chains that bind workers and the oppressed to the Democratic Party through the forging of a revolutionary workers party to lead a socialist revolution that breaks the power of the bourgeoisie and establishes workers rule.

Currently, bourgeois critics have responded to the popular dissatisfaction by pointing out that Bill Clinton was impeached for merely lying about getting a little sexual gratification on the sly. Richard Nixon, who presided over the humiliating U.S. defeat in Vietnam, was eventually forced to resign as president for merely approving and subsequently covering up a break-in into Democratic Party offices at the Watergate complex. The Bush administration has been no slacker in its disdain for other institutions of capitalist rule in this country. It has lied to House and Senate committees and openly defied the injunctions of several courts.

If too much goes to hell the seemingly indomitable Bush will pay the piper in one way or another. One is reminded that in the summer of 1933, at the very beginning of "New Deal" Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt's first term during the depths of the Great Depression, General Smedley Butler was approached by businessmen to lead a 500,000-strong march of veterans on Washington. With Roosevelt then severely incapacitated by polio, Butler correctly interpreted this "request," which was accompanied by a bribe, as an attempt at a military coup. Fortunately for Roosevelt, Butler blew the whistle on the plot. If evil befalls Bush by whatever mechanism, he will have more than earned it. The most just outcome would be if he, Bill Clinton and Bush Sr. were to face a tribunal in Iraq to account for the million-plus Iraqi lives taken in the service of American imperialism's aspirations for world dominance.

But such justice in this imperialist world is not to be anticipated. Nor will any independent commission fix the problems of imperialist war or end the grinding exploitation that most Americans have to face whatever Bush's fate. Only the overturn of the capitalist order and its spread throughout the world will end for all time imperialist war and man's exploitation by man. For decades the working class in this country has lain prostrate before the bosses because it remains tied to the Democratic Party—in the case of its trade-union component, through the medium of the "America first" trade-union bureaucracy. That tie must be severed and a revolutionary working-class party forged. It is to that end that the Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, directs all its efforts. ***Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. and allied imperialist forces out of the Near East!***■

NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate issues in June, July and August.**

Our next issue will be dated August 29.

BT Renegades...

(continued from page 3)

any role." The BT cries that is a "piggish" reference to the Kurds. Only in the minds of those genuinely inspired by chauvinism could "turds" be seen as referring to Kurds! And that is the BT. Insofar as this organization has taken any note of the national oppression of myriad peoples around the globe, and that isn't much, the BT has been strident in declaring its opposition to the exercise of their right to self-determination—with the exception of Kosovo just at the time when Kosovo Albanian separatists were acting as bomb-spotters for the 1999 U.S./NATO war against Serbia. For the BT, the Kurds number among those whose demands for independence get in the way of the "struggles of the workers and peasants against the existing oppressor states."

And it doesn't just apply to the Kurds. The BT has achieved some notoriety for its opposition to independence for Quebec, winning the BT an official invite from the organizers of a mass Anglo-chauvinist "Maple Leaf" unity rally in Montreal on the eve of a 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty (and also losing them their only Québécois member, who quit protesting the BT's "de facto bloc with the Canadian bourgeoisie"). Here too the BT tries to hide its chauvinism behind appeals for "joint class struggle," echoing the Anglo-chauvinist labor bureaucrats in Canada who also argue that independence for Quebec would be harmful to "labor solidarity."

And speaking of adaptation to "great-power chauvinism," how about the abjectly reformist Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), which the BT tried to woo into discussions "for political regroupment" a few years back? It didn't bother them that the 1995 draft program of the CPGB openly pronounced: "The capitalist state in Britain has an official ideology of anti-racism" (*Weekly Worker*, 5 September 1999). In fact, these fusion negotiations fell apart only because the CPGB rejected the BT's advances.

In the U.S., the BT similarly dances to the political tune of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats, mirroring their indifference to the struggles of the black masses. When the Spartacist League in 1982 mobilized the power of labor and the black community to successfully spike a Ku Klux Klan provocation in Washington, D.C., and launched Labor Black Leagues based on that victory, the BT claimed we were turning our backs on the unions and disparaged this as "community organizing"!

In America, where anti-black racism has always been the handmaiden of reaction and black militancy has always been seen as profoundly subversive, the fight to mobilize the multiracial working class in defense of the oppressed black masses is the key to the socialist revolution. Fortunately, black workers and youth in Washington and black longshoremen and shipyard workers from union locals throughout the South did not share the BT's disdain for our anti-Klan mobilization. Only those for whom "the working class" means the labor aristocracy could see our mobilization for the unity and integrity of the working class against capitalist "divide and rule" racism and its fascist shock troops as anything but a fight *for* the survival of the unions as instruments for the elementary defense of the proletariat.

WV Photo

As SL/PDC mobilized during worldwide protest campaign to stop execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1995, capitalists' house organ picked up BT's "cult" smear to vilify Mumia's supporters.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
16 June 1995

Not Much Left: 'The Movement' Is Pretty Still Nowadays

• • •

Despite the GOP Revolution, Radical Groups Can't Win Converts to Their Brand

...led by Angela Davis ...
...er Communist Party USA member...
The Spartacists are led by a man named James Robertson, prompting the International Bolshevik Tendency, a group of former Spartacists, to deride their old party as "Jimstown," a takeoff on Jonestown in Guyana, the jungle site of mass suicide.

Garbage Doesn't Walk by Itself

In "BT Doth Whine Too Much" (*WV* No. 806, 4 July), we published excerpts from the BT's letter which charged that we had "grossly" misrepresented their views on the Kurdish people; in response, we demonstrated their opposition to Kurdish independence, largely by citing the BT's own words from articles in its press, *1917*. But the purpose of the BT's letter was its postscript—to slander the SL and comrade Robertson in particular as "chauvinist." The leaflet which the BT fed to the SWP's goons at Marxism snidely intones that our omission of "any comment on the letter's postscript" in *WV* is evidence of our "implicit acceptance" of their "vulgar chauvinism" slander. What we plead guilty to is fatuous gullibility. As we write in our editorial statement (see page 3): "We excised the 'P.S.' because it was a contemptible lie, but in so doing fell into the BT's trap and implied guilt with our evasive silence." We responded to the BT's letter as if it were some kind of legitimate political dispute in the workers movement and as though the purpose of their letter actually had anything to do with the plight of the Kurdish people. More fool us; we should have, and do, know better.

The BT isn't an outfit that has any concern with the clash of political opinion that is critical to raising the consciousness of workers and radicalized youth. And it never has had such concern. The founders of the BT all individually quit our organization coincident with the onset of anti-Soviet 1980s Cold War II, when the stakes of being "red" got a lot higher than they were in the period of the "New Left" and Vietnam antiwar movement when most of them joined. A couple of years later, this ragtag collection of political cowards got together to concoct a political rationale for their lack of intestinal fortitude, claiming that they had been "purged" for their political views. They didn't have a word, much less a document, they could point to as evidence of their putative political opposition, just their pathetic resignation statements.

But although their political appetites—which are generally rightist and generally reflect the fringes of petty-bourgeois academia they overwhelmingly inhabit—should lead them elsewhere, the BT has throughout its existence pursued an unnatural obsession with our organization. And they have a rather consistent history of staging provocations against us just when other forces—ranging from the reformists straight up to agencies of the bourgeoisie—are gunning for us. Thus in 1983, the BT (then calling itself the External Tendency) launched an international campaign labeling us as "violent," lying that we had assaulted one of their members. We were at the time engaged in a very serious legal fight against the FBI, which had targeted our organization as "violent." And here we have a group of ex-members of our organization screaming that we are "violent." Whose interests did this serve?

In 1985 they published a highly inventive piece of reptile journalism titled "The Road to Jimstown," smearing our party as an "obedience cult" and spinning lurid, slanderous tales of corruption and worse. In 1995, these slanders against us were picked up by no less a mouthpiece for the American capitalist rulers than the *Wall Street Journal*. The purpose was to try to undercut growing domestic and international protest in defense of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was then under immediate threat of execution. In their efforts to portray Jamal as a depraved "cop killer," the *Wall Street Journal* (16 June 1995) happily picked up the BT's smears to depict the Partisan Defense Committee—the central organization that had been fighting for others to take up his case—as associated with a crazed "cult." As we wrote almost two decades ago, "Those who are guided by intense subjective malice as a political program are just asking to be someone's tool, witting or unwitting (sometimes both)" ("ET: New Name, Same Game?" *WV* No. 388, 4 October 1985).

The addition of Bill Logan as the BT's own dear leader in 1990 added a whole new dimension to the BT's obsession with trying to get us by any means necessary. Logan was expelled at the first international conference of our tendency in 1979 following a thorough investigation by an international Control Commission and trial body which found him to be a twisted sociopath who manipulated the most intimate details of comrades' personal lives for his own power purposes and gratification. The charges against Logan were brought by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand. The documents on the Logan regime in Britain had unleashed a torrent of painful testimony by the overwhelmingly young comrades of the remote Australian section, of which

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No. 8: The Bolshevik Tendency: From the Snake Pit of Anti-Spartacism, July 1993, $4 (140 pages)

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On the Logan Regime
(Three parts)
In 1979, Bill Logan was expelled from the international Spartacist tendency for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate human decency." Logan is now the leader of the "International Bolshevik Tendency." As a service to the workers movement we have made our international bulletins documenting Logan's crimes publicly available.

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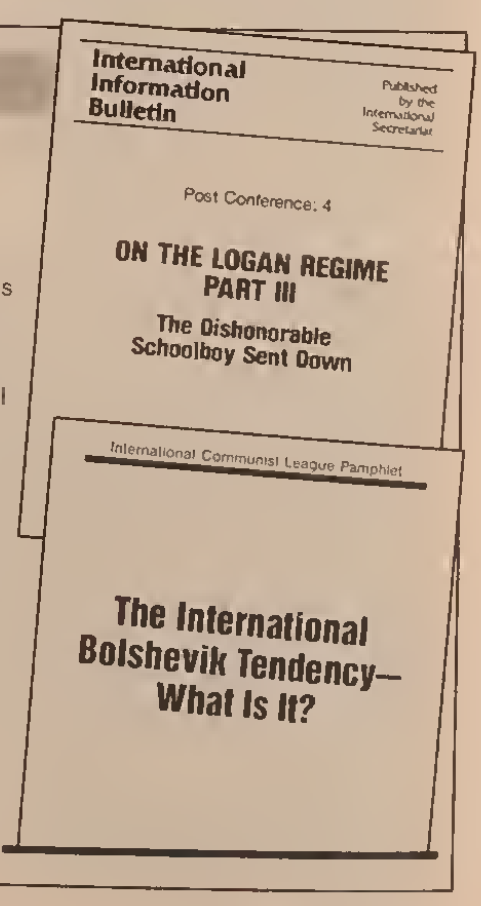


Logan had formerly been national chairman for years. As Reuben Samuels, who was sent to Australia on behalf of the international at the time, recounted in a recent document: "Exploiting their inexperience as well as deep devotion to our program, in Australia Logan ran a personality cult based on poisonous intrigue and manipulation of the most private details of comrades' personal lives. 'Loyalty' was measured by loyalty to the 'Chairman's' latest whim. Comrades were told who they should couple up with or not. Offspring were considered a curse and abortion a party 'duty,' so that one comrade with a baby was rendered suicidal."

Logan was expelled for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency." The motion passed unanimously by delegates at our international conference (including some who would later found the BT) concluded that Logan "cannot be and should never have been a member of a working-class organization." As a measure of protection of the workers movement, we took the unusual step of making our internal bulletins documenting the Logan case publicly available and expending some effort to get them into major libraries in Australia and New Zealand.

One Sick Puppy

Eleven years later, the BT embraced Logan as one of its own. Unlike the Saudi royal family, who merely granted asylum to deposed Ugandan dictator Idi Amin, the BT anointed Logan as its *líder maximo*, and launched itself as an "international" tendency. And now the BT seizes on a statement from comrade Robertson made *25 years ago*—a statement that never elicited a single objection from the several future BTers then still in our organization—from our publicly available internal bulletins.Today, the BT contorts this statement in order to make the lying charge of "vulgar chauvinism" and peddles the slander to larger reformist outfits (and who knows who else).

It is notable that the postscript to the BT's 12 June letter to *WV*, recounted in the written ammo they gave the SWP at "Marxism," omits any mention of Logan. They can't manage to mention that the quotation from comrade Robertson that they pulled out and twisted beyond recognition comes from a bulletin titled "On the Logan Regime Part I." How come? Why has Logan become the equivalent of that empty space on retouched photos? What is the BT hiding?

A look at Logan's Web site (bl.co.nz) might offer some answers. Here Logan advertises his services as a "counselor, narrative therapist and celebrant." The man who tried to force a young woman comrade to have an abortion and when that failed pressured her to put her child in a foster home now provides sample texts for funerals for babies. The man who aped all the attitudes of the long-decayed British "empire" to play on internalized oppression of working-class youth, women and those from the "colonies" now offers a "secular grace" worthy of a fat bourgeois sitting down to his dinner as he gushes with condescending thanks "to those who planted the crops... to those who gathered the harvest...to those who prepared it and those who served it." The man who spoke the language of her majesty's Parliament in objecting to any criticism of himself that might find its way into the membership as a "breach in diplomacy" when he was in our organization, now advertises the "Anglican and Presbyterian influences of my childhood" on his Web site. A sadistic Colonel Blimp turned "all god's children" missionary—to say that this is one sick puppy is a vast understatement.

Tell Me Who Your Friends Are...

An early sign that something wasn't quite right with Logan was when he started writing documents arguing that bands of armed guerrillas were sufficient for the establishment of a workers state on any piece of territory, including coming very close to arguing that a workers state could be built in "one cave." This particular "theory" has much in common with the views of Pol Pot. And with the benefit of hindsight, one can see the shared and grotesque distortion of Marxism into a vicious personality cult that characterized Logan's "methods" of leadership. On the other side of the equation in looking at what makes the BT tick, there's Al Richardson of the journal *Revolutionary History*. A raving anti-Communist inspired by the "democratic traditions" of parliamentary Labourism, Richardson was check by jowl with the BT at "Marxism."

WV Photo

26 October 2002: Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent organized by Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Clubs at Washington, D.C. antiwar protest.

Such is the political company in which the BT logically belongs. The second leaflet that the BT was handing out at Marxism ("Compare and Contrast—ICL vs. IBT on Stalinism & Soviet Defencism") provided a veritable compendium of the BT's anti-Sovietism. This ranged from their denunciation of our call to "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan" fighting the CIA-backed, anti-woman Islamic reactionaries to their claim that our statement of military support to the Kremlin Stalinists should they have intervened to stop the bid for power by the anti-Semitic, clerical-reactionary Solidarność in Poland in 1981 was a "Stalinophilic perversion of the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the bureaucratized workers states."

Given this track record, the BT's charge that we "flinched" on Soviet defensism by not giving military support to the impotent Kremlin coup plotters against Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary forces in 1991 would appear all the more remarkable. The "Gang of Eight" coup makers made no move against Yeltsin, militarily or otherwise, for the simple reason that they were as committed as Yeltsin's clique to capitalist restoration but lacked the backing of U.S. imperialism. In fact, the BT's after-the-fact support to the "Gang of Eight" was simply a convenient means for the BT to be able to drop its always highly nominal position of Soviet defensism by declaring the battle against capitalist restoration already lost. In contrast, the ICL distributed tens of thousands of copies of our leaflet "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" in the Soviet Union. It was only when it was clear that the working class was not going to move against Yeltsin, who was rapidly consolidating a capitalist state, that we accepted that the USSR had been definitively destroyed.

And you can bet your boots that the BT forgot about its military support to the coup plotters in the company of the SWP, which cheered Yeltsin's counterrevolution as a cause for "rejoicing." On the contrary, an intervention by a BT speaker at an SWP forum at "Marxism" on "Russia 1917 and Soviet Democracy" was so pusillanimous that he got sustained applause from much of the audience, which was replete with state-capitalist, anti-Communist SWPers. And what about the BT's line that imperialist troops should "live like pigs, die like pigs"? The BT charged us with "social-patriotism" because we didn't cheer the deaths of 240 U.S. Marines blown up by a car bomb—planted by persons and forces unknown—in Lebanon in 1983 as an act of "anti-imperialism." As we noted at the time, the BT's vicarious bloodthirstiness was both a convenient posture against us and directly proportional to their distance from where the blood was being shed. At "Marxism" our comrades challenged the BT to apply its supposed convictions a little closer to home and intervene into a forum on Northern Ireland to demand that the British troops there should "die like pigs." Not bloody likely. Instead the leader of the BT's British outfit politely asked why the Socialist Alliance, which has been little more than an electoral front group for the SWP, does not "call for British troops out of Northern Ireland now." Why? Maybe it has something to do with the fact that the SWP *supported* the intervention of these troops in 1969?! But that's the BT's standard operating procedure—they reserve their bile for the revolutionists while crawling before the large reformist forces.

Thus to the extent the BT has a political profile, it is as centrists who use their anti-Spartacism as the entry ticket into the swamp of social democracy. But the BT is also something else altogether: a vicious gang of crazed "god that failed" renegades, eager to serve the purposes of those who would like to destroy us. Lies and slanders are their weapons of choice, as they are the first recourse for the bosses when they want to break strikes and for the defenders of the racist status quo when they seek to destroy fighters for black liberation.

From the time of Marx on, Marxists have always been committed to elementary sanitation in the workers movement. We do not know whether the BT is motivated simply by its obsessive malice or by something even more sinister. But in seeking to destroy the nucleus of the indispensable Leninist vanguard, they serve the interests of all the enemies of the revolutionary proletariat. To smear the ICL as "chauvinists" is to strike at the very heart of what we are and what we must be to play a role in the liberation of all mankind from capitalist tyranny.■

Verizon...

(continued from page 16)

crosses. At the outset of the 2000 strike, mass pickets shut out management scabs in Philadelphia. Later, when the union tops in the company's northern division reached a settlement and ordered the membership back to work, workers from Pennsylvania and points south took a page from the union battles of the 1930s by dispatching "flying squadrons" that picketed out facilities in the northeast, including strategic NYC locations organized by CWA Local 1101. It was due to such determination that the unions were able to beat back the bulk of the company's demands for concessions.

Some big business media suggest that Verizon wants a dragged-out strike to see how well it could run its highly automated systems without union labor. A 1981 strike by telephone workers in British Columbia showed how to beat that: instead of marching out, they occupied every major installation and held the company's property hostage. But to carry out tactics like that, you need a union leadership that does not bow to the capitalists' "property rights."

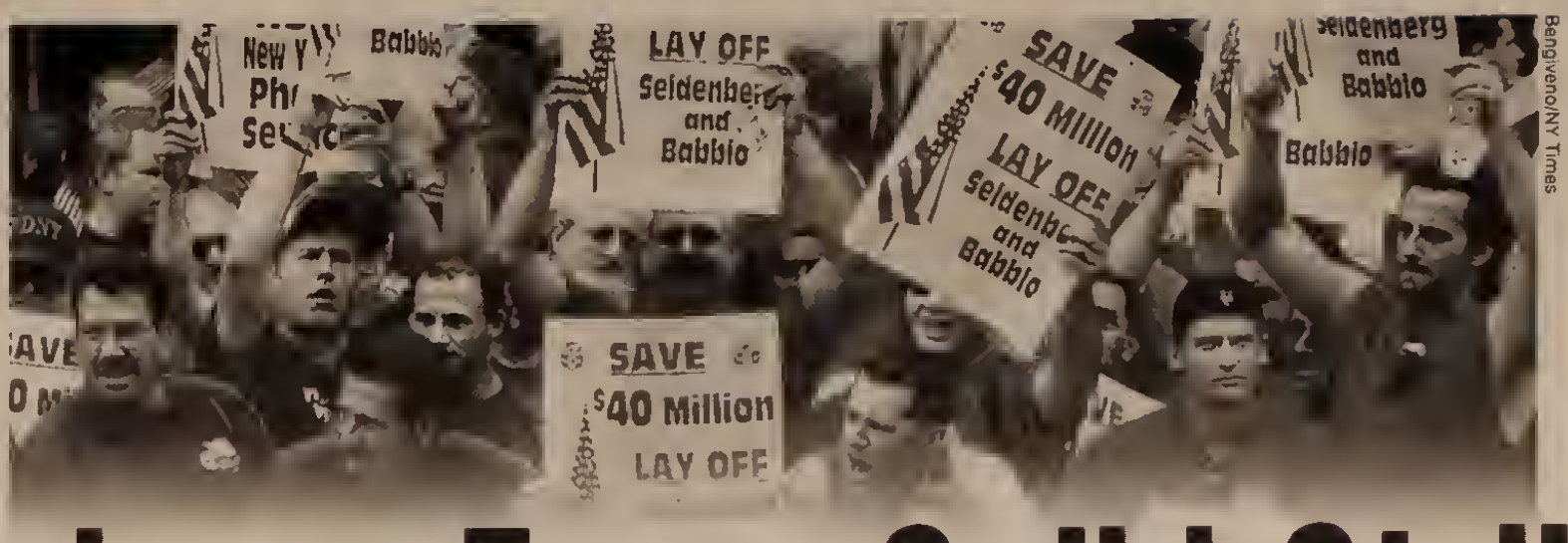
A vital issue in this contract battle, as in 2000, is organizing the 20,000 workers at Verizon Wireless, which has billions in profit riding on keeping the union out while this part of the industry is expanding. The unions should bolster their fight to defend and increase union jobs by appealing to unemployed workers, showing that they have a common stake in this struggle. Three years ago, the union tops settled for contract language supposedly guaranteeing the company's "neutrality" during organizing campaigns. But as we wrote at the time in "Verizon Strike Rattles Wall Street" (*WV* No. 740, 25 August 2000), "The corporate owners are *never* neutral when it comes to their profits." Of course, the company flouted the "neutrality" agreement from Day One. Now CWA spokesman Bob Master complains that on management's part, "There was never any good-faith effort to live up to it" (*Village Voice*, 9 July).

A successful strike could set the stage for a concerted drive to *organize the unorganized*, not only at Verizon Wireless but at former CWA strongholds like AT&T as well as largely non-union companies like Sprint and MCI. A key reason the capitalists deregulated the industry in the first place was to divide the unionized workforce at the former AT&T monopoly and open the door to non-union outfits. Divisions between the IBEW and CWA, and even between locals within these unions, have led at times to workers stabbing each other in the back by crossing the others' picket lines. There is a crying need for *one industrial union for all telecom workers.*

The union bureaucracy did nothing to fight against the growth of non-union companies, particularly in the South. Organizing the South means taking head-on the issue of racist discrimination—on and off the job—which has long been used to keep black people "in their place" and unions out. Verizon's intention to tear up the no-layoff contract clause is a direct threat against younger workers, including large numbers of blacks and Hispanics, who were brought into the workforce during the telecom boom. The union cannot go forward without fighting to defend these workers' jobs and combatting the racist and sexist bigotry that is reinforced by the craft divisions separating higher-paid, overwhelmingly male technicians from operators and clerks, largely minority women.

The battle looming at Verizon points to the utter irrationality and chaos of the capitalist profit system. Many thousands of miles of fiber-optic cables that were laid during the 1990s boom now lie unused, and unemployed communications workers are ending up in homeless shelters. Labor needs a leadership that understands that the "partnership" of labor and capital is a lie, that stands for the complete independence of the working class from the capitalists' government and political parties. Forging such a leadership through sharp class struggle will be a crucial step in building a workers party that fights for a workers government, which would expropriate the capitalist class and build a planned economy. When those who labor rule, technological advances would not mean workers being thrown onto the scrap heap but would mean reduced workdays, better working conditions and more leisure, and the wealth of society would be used for the benefit of all.■

WORKERS VANGUARD



Bengiveno/NY Times

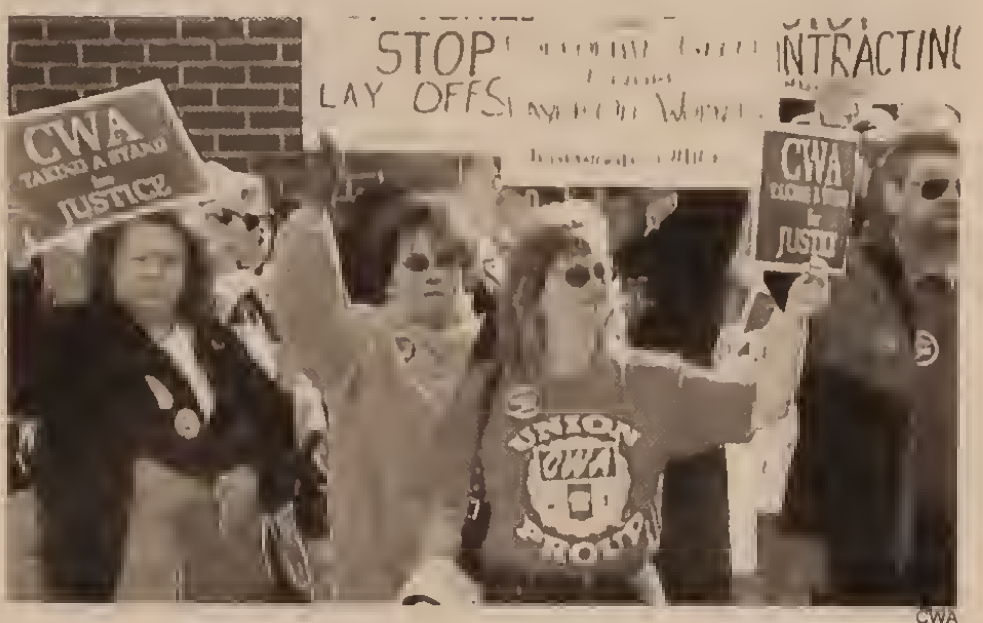
Verizon: For a Solid Strike to Stop Union-Busting!

From Maine to Virginia, 75,000 members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) are faced with a battle against the Verizon telecommunications giant that could determine the fate of unions in the industry. Verizon is demanding massive union concessions to maximize its profit margin in competition with non-union outfits created since the deregulation of the industry in the 1980s. The company wants to gut seniority, create a "two-tier" system that pits new-hires against high-seniority workers, force huge increases in workers' health insurance payments, allow virtually unlimited subcontracting and job transfers and junk the "no-layoff" clause in the contract. CWA members voted 92 percent to authorize a strike when the contract expires on August 2.

The task now is to *prepare a solid strike to defeat Verizon's union-busting!* Three years ago, when the unions fought Verizon for over two weeks in a combative strike, the capitalist media was forced to admit that "organized labor still has a place in the New Economy" (*New York Times*, 21 August 2000). Now with the economy mired in recession and hundreds of thousands of highly skilled telecom workers laid off, and with the aggressively anti-labor Bush administration in office, the bosses are out to destroy the unions' "place" entirely. Unlike previous strikes, in which Verizon relied on managers to cross picket lines and keep systems running, the company is openly recruiting unemployed telecom workers to scab through the Volt company, as well as calling on retirees. Verizon, General Electric and Tyson Foods have all hardlined demands for union givebacks despite enormous profits, $4.1 billion for Verizon last year alone. This points to the high stakes in this battle for the entire labor movement.

To wage the hard fight necessary to win, Verizon workers must understand where their power lies and the obstacles in the way of using it. Telecommunications is central to the national economy. If Wall Street traders can't get their stock quotes because their phone lines are down, they'll be screaming bloody murder. And if the capitalists feel their sacred profits threatened, the same government that is carrying out a brutal colonial occupation of Iraq—and fleecing working people at home to the tune of $4 billion a month to pay for it!—will be prepared to use the cops and courts against a telecom strike.

The "war on terror" wielded by the Bush gang, with the assistance of the Democrats, to slaughter thousands in Afghanistan and Iraq has also meant mass roundups of immigrants and a wholesale assault on civil liberties and union rights on the home front. When the contract for the West Coast International Longshore and Warehouse Union expired last summer, "Homeland Security" director Tom Ridge warned the union president that a strike could "threaten national security." When shipping bosses locked out the union for ten days, Bush invoked the slave-labor Taft-Hartley Act in Octo-



CWA

Union rally outside Verizon shareholders meeting in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, April.

her to force the union back to work on the bosses' terms. Outside a mass union meeting in New York City last week, CWA members told *Workers Vanguard* salesmen that they had heard of government threats to use the USA-Patriot Act against phone strikers.

But the main obstacle facing Verizon workers is a union leadership that has pledged allegiance to the "war on terror," which has served as a pretext for attacks on the labor movement, and that chains workers to the capitalist system through support to the Democratic Party. In a February 2002 speech delivered as U.S. bombers laid waste to Afghanistan, CWA president Morton Bahr correctly pointed out that "President Bush and his colleagues are trying to use the terrorist threat as a smokescreen to undermine our unions and our rights." But in the same speech he proclaimed that "we are in the war against terrorism to protect our basic freedoms" and "will support our government on the war."

The CWA bureaucracy has historically been among the most active supporters of U.S. imperialism, for example through building the anti-Communist American Institute for Free Labor Development, which aided death squad terror against leftists and union militants from Chile to El Salvador. Today CWA spokesmen brag about bringing into the union some 40,000 cops and sheriffs, whose job is to enforce capitalist "law and order" by busting picket lines, terrorizing the ghettos and carrying out the "war on terror" against immigrants and the rest of the population. Cops out of the unions!

The union tops have done precious little to prepare for a strike, besides spending more than $1 million on an ad campaign designed to gain public sympathy by lambasting Verizon execs' huge pay packages. But what must be understood is that questions of union tactics flow from a broader political perspective. The CWA bureaucracy exemplifies the class collaborationism of the American labor misleadership, which regards the capitalist system of production for profit as sacrosanct and proclaims the unity of interests of the working class with those of the racist imperialist rulers.

Any serious labor struggle brings to the forefront the need to break the unions' ties to the Democratic Party, the "soft cops" of American capitalism. When Bahr and other union bureaucrats rail about the overt enemy of labor in the White House, it is to gear up support for the Democratic "lesser evil." The AFL-CIO tops are currently engaged in efforts to revive the Democrats for next year's presidential elections by hammering Bush over his lies about Iraq's supposed "weapons of mass destruction," the pretext for the colonial war and occupation. But the Democrats went along with that war and the one before in Afghanistan, as well as the panoply of anti-immigrant, anti-labor "war on terror" laws at home. For the working class to fight in its own class interests, there must be a political struggle to break labor from the Democratic Party and forge a workers party committed to sweeping away the capitalist system that is predicated on unemployment, poverty, racial oppression and war.

Communications workers demonstrated the crucial role they play immediately following the criminal attack on the World Trade Center. Workers from not only NYC but from upstate New York, Connecticut and New Jersey piled into lower Manhattan, working more than 12-hour days, seven days a week for weeks at a time to get the communications grid up and running; the New York Stock Exchange was working only a week after the attack. The thanks these workers got was a kick in the teeth, with mass layoffs and stepped-up victimizations on the job, just as firemen who risked life and limb on 9/11 have been met with station closings. Last year alone Verizon slashed 18,000 jobs while doling out $25 million to its two top executives (not counting stock options). Earlier this month, an arbitrator reversed the layoffs of over 2,300 Verizon workers, which violated the "no-layoff" contract clause, and ordered them reinstated with full back pay.

Verizon has declared its intention to keep all operations running in the event of a strike. Workers laid off only months ago have received letters enticing them to cross picket lines. Verizon has also been training its non-union employees, especially in the South, to do struck work. Attempting to intimidate union members, the company has ratcheted up disciplinary measures on the job and installed cameras outside workplaces to film picketers.

The CWA and IBEW must be prepared to form solid picket lines, backed by the rest of the labor movement, that no one

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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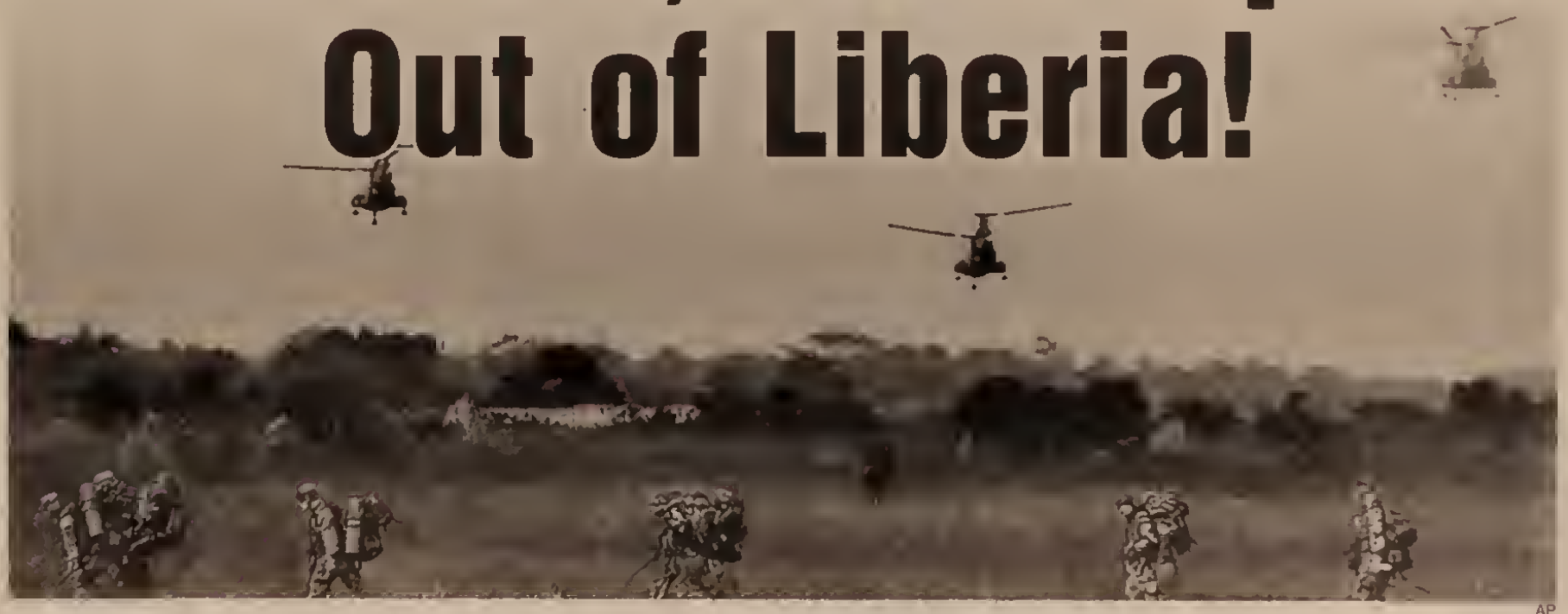
No. 808

29 August 2003

Black Democrats Push Racist U.S. Intervention

All U.S./UN Troops Out of Liberia!



AP

U.S. Marines outside Liberian capital of Monrovia. U.S. troops are overseeing Nigerian "peacekeeping" intervention force.

AUGUST 26—The West African country of Liberia is today among those slated for direct imperialist overlordship. In the guise of bringing peace to that country's desperately embattled population, a force of more than 1,500 mainly Nigerian troops, overseen by 100 U.S. Marines, has moved into the capital, Monrovia. This is the advance guard of a larger UN force, projected to occupy the country this fall and turn it into a UN trusteeship, a thin cover for direct domination by the would-be masters of the universe in Washington.

The U.S./UN occupation of Liberia will do nothing to ease the terrible suffering of the Liberian people after more than a decade of all-out civil war and can only pave the way for even greater bloodletting—at the hands of various rebel gangs and by the racist imperialists as well as their Nigerian henchmen. The U.S.-trained and U.S.-supplied Nigerian army, which already occupied Liberia during much of the 1990s, actively helped perpetuate the bloodshed there through widespread trafficking in drugs and arms, while plundering the country of everything down to the scrap iron from destroyed buildings. Today, these same forces are being touted in the capitalist media as "peacekeepers."

By far the strongest advocates of U.S. military intervention in Liberia have been the black Democrats. The best-known of them, Jesse Jackson, is calling not just for a short-term "peacekeeping" operation but a long-term colonial-type "reconstruction" of Liberia, parroting the language of Bush & Co. in Iraq. In arguing for a U.S. occupation of Liberia, Jackson is openly pushing Bush's global agenda, specifically targeting the two countries besides Iraq on Bush's "axis of evil" list: "The president already has put 2,500 Marines on ships off the coast. If we don't have enough troops to sustain them, then countries across the world from North Korea to Iran are likely to draw stark conclusions" (Chicago *Sun-Times*, 5 August).

The Bush administration was initially half-hearted about sending U.S. troops to Liberia and many Pentagon generals were opposed. With daily American casualties in Iraq, Marine Corps General Peter Pace warned that Liberia "is potentially a very dangerous situation" (New York Times, 25 July). Many of these American military men remember being burned by the Somalia adventure in the early 1990s. In response to the Pentagon's hesitance about sending troops to Liberia, New Jersey Democrat Donald Payne, a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, said: "It's because they're African, and they're black, and they don't count." The attitude of America's ruling circles toward black Africa is certainly one of racist

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PDC/LBL Speaker

"Only Class Struggle Can Break Chains of U.S. Imperialism"

Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Down With U.S. Occupation of Iraq!

On July 20 the Bay Area Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League for Social Defense held their annual summer fund-raising barbecue. This year all proceeds will be donated to the defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal. We print below the speech, edited for publication, of Spartacist League supporter Don Cane, who spoke on behalf of the PDC and LBL.

I am speaking on behalf of two organizations, the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for Social Defense. The LBL is a fraternally allied organization of the Marxist Spartacist League, of which the PDC is the legal and social defense arm. Also within our revolutionary camp is the dynamic Spartacus Youth Club, a communist training school for tomorrow's workers leaders. Most of you are familiar with our organizations. Some of you may not be fully familiar, so I will give you a basic introduction to them.

The organizational names speak for themselves, indicating the content of the organizations. The PDC takes up causes in the interest of the working class as a whole. It is non-sectarian and at the same time partisan—partisan on the side of the workers and oppressed and non-sectarian in its united-front defense work. The LBL is an activist organization based on a 10-point program that encapsulates the perspective of the Leninist tribune of the people—mobilizing the social power of labor on behalf of all the oppressed, challenging

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Toussaint Finks for NYC Transit Bosses

Hands Off Clarence Little!

NEW YORK CITY—In an outrageous move, Roger Toussaint, president of New York City's Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, released internal union documents to the transit bosses' Labor Relations department, resulting in the suspension of a union member who now faces termination. The incident began on April 30, when two members of the union's executive board, Clarence Little, a critic of Toussaint and a supporter of the *Rank and File Advocate* faction of the bureaucracy, and Eladio Diaz, a Toussaint-loyal staffer, got into a physical altercation inside a union office at NYC Transit's (NYCT) headquarters. Claiming he was punched in the neck, Diaz called on company security and the NYPD, and then filed a criminal report with the police. Within days, Little was not only out of his job as a train operator but also arrested on a misdemeanor assault charge and barred from the union hall.

When the company's Labor Relations went into motion as a consequence of the altercation, they got nowhere because union witnesses rightly, as an act of elementary union principle, refused to give statements to the company's "plantation justice" machine. But not Toussaint, who faxed Labor Relations information from the union's internal investigation of the incident. Toussaint's only purpose in doing so was to sic the company on a critic of his regime. This is an act of class treason!

The cops are the racist, strikebreaking thugs of the capitalist rulers, who suppress class struggle and terrorize the ghettos and barrios. It's no accident that thousands of cops were deployed to intimidate and attack the TWU during the heated union contract meetings and rallies of 1999 and 2002. Under the rubric of the "war on terror," cops have increasingly been unleashed on workers, black people and immigrants—witness the NYPD killings of Alberta Spruill, Ousmane Zongo, Calvin Washington and José Mateo this year alone. It's even become a frequent occurrence for NYCT bosses to call the cops on union reps and militants on whatever pretext they can dream up. Transit security guards are the NYCT's police force within the company and, like the cops, have no place inside workers organizations.

Toussaint's latest crime should come as no surprise—it is the bitter fruit of a program of class collaboration. A glaring example of that program was the presence of the head of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association speaking on the platform of the 15 December 2002 union rally at the very moment Toussaint was signing the sellout contract.

The victimization of Little takes place with union elections approaching this December. Toussaint's leadership of the union has become increasingly discredited following last year's sellout contract, as well as revelations that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority was hiding hundreds of millions of dollars while pleading poverty during contract negotiations and then ramming through a 33 percent fare hike. This contract shafted not only the transit workers but all city workers, who are now working without a contract. Toussaint's enlisting the company and the cops in order to attack his opponents within the union is a gift to the MTA at a time when it is widely despised, and plays right into the company's anti-union assaults. Whatever happened between Diaz and Little, as in all such disputes between workers, it should have been resolved ***within the union***. Labor must clean its own house—***cops and courts out of the union!*** At the same time, violence has no place in working-class debates and disputes. Thuggery is intended to create an atmosphere of intimidation and fear, poisoning the potential for unified class struggle.

In *Rank and File Advocate* (June 2003), *RAFA* writes: "Regardless who was right or wrong, this should have been handled within the union." However, *RAFA* shares the same program as Toussaint—reliance on the mythical good graces of the Democratic Party and the courts, instead of reliance on Local 100's enormous union power. They, too, have invited the cops into the union. In the very same issue, *RAFA* reports on a confrontation in mid-May between their supporter, Josh Fraidstern, a train operator who was handing out their newsletter, and a Toussaint-loyal staff rep, Kevin Barnes. Barnes allegedly pushed Fraidstern to the ground. In retaliation, the *RAFA* supporter later filed a police report against him! Though *RAFA* lamely writes that Fraidstern "has chosen not to press charges," the fact remains that he ***finked***, turning in the name of a union member to the cops.

The New Directions (ND) faction of the union bureaucracy brought Toussaint to power in January 2001 with empty gestures of "militancy," having repeatedly dragged the union into the bosses' courts via lawsuits and Labor Department "investigations." Since then, Toussaint has even more actively than the prior Willie James leadership worked to turn Local 100 into a "political machine" for the Democratic Party, stifling struggles that would put him in hot water with the capitalists and their politicians. In doing so, he has gained a reputation for brooking no opposition to his personal rule, sidelining and purging many of his former "left" waterboys who have gone on to form *RAFA*.

With his cringing loyalty to NYC's political bosses, Toussaint has been receiving accolades from the City Council to the State Assembly and beyond. *The Chief-Leader*, a civil service newspaper, even praised Toussaint for his actions against Little, claiming that "Gangster unions believe that assault and intimidation are private matters" and "Mr. Toussaint did what he is supposed to do...by turning over information to investigators." All this preaching about "gangster unions" is nothing but an invitation for government intervention. And that's exactly what happened with the Teamsters union, with the help of the then-"opposition" Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), when a 1989 "consent decree" placed that powerful union under the thumb of the capitalist government.

The capitalists once deemed every union a "criminal conspiracy" and still seek to criminalize any real measures the unions need to take in their own defense. As we said in "NYC Transit: Government Out of the Union!" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 691, 22 May 1998) in response to ND's use of the capitalist courts against its bureaucratic rivals:

> "The capitalist state—the courts, cops and prisons—is the enemy of the working class, organized to prevent the workers from struggling in their own interests and particularly from smashing this system of private property and taking power themselves. Appeals by phony 'oppositionists' like ND to the bosses' state degrade the consciousness of the working class. Every class-conscious worker must demand the complete and unconditional independence of the labor movement from the capitalist government!"

In order to break the union bureaucracy's cycle of deception and betrayal, workers need a class-struggle leadership that will fight for workers power against the capitalist rulers, their cops, courts and politicians. Working people need their own party, a multiracial revolutionary workers party, that can mobilize the social power of labor in the struggle to end this system of capitalist exploitation and oppression through a victorious socialist revolution.

When in 1999 Roger Toussaint was being victimized by the transit bosses—with the help of the James bureaucracy—we called on all TWU members to come to his defense (see "Reinstate Victimized New Directions Supporter! Down With New Directions Anti-Union Court Suit!" *WV* No. 715, 11 June 1999). Today, it is the elementary duty of every union member to defend Clarence Little against NYC Transit and to demand that he be reinstated immediately. Hands off Clarence Little!■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Their Morals and Ours

In his battle for authentic Bolshevism and the forging of the world party of socialist revolution, the Fourth International, Leon Trotsky waged relentless war against both the murderous Stalinists and slanderous petty-bourgeois "leftists" whose preachings of "morality" cloaked their hatred of Bolshevism, which they falsely identified with Stalinism. These selections from Their Morals and Ours, *written during the 1936-38 Moscow frame-up trials, demonstrate that truth is a weapon in the service of the proletariat.*

During an epoch of triumphant reaction, Messrs. Democrats, Social Democrats, Anarchists, and other representatives of the "left" camp begin to exude double their usual amount of moral effluvia, similar to persons who perspire doubly in fear. Paraphrasing the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount, these moralists address themselves not so much to triumphant reaction as to those revolutionists suffering under its persecution, who with their "excesses" and "amoral" principles "provoke" reaction and give it moral justification. Moreover they prescribe a simple but certain means of avoiding reaction: It is necessary only to strive and morally to regenerate oneself. Free samples of moral perfection for those desirous are furnished by all the interested editorial offices.

The class basis of this false and pompous sermon is the intellectual petty bourgeoisie. The political basis—their impotence and confusion in the face of approaching reaction. Psychological basis—their effort at overcoming the feeling of their own inferiority through masquerading in the beard of a prophet.

* * * * *

The liberation of the workers can come only through the workers themselves. There is, therefore, no greater crime than deceiving the masses, palming off defeats as victories, friends as enemies, bribing workers' leaders, fabricating legends, staging false trials, in a word, doing what the Stalinists do. These means can serve only one end: lengthening the domination of a clique already condemned by history. But they cannot serve to liberate the masses. That is why the Fourth International wages a life and death struggle against Stalinism.

— Leon Trotsky, *Their Morals and Ours* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 26 August.

No. 808 **29 August 2003**

Agins/NY Times

December 2002: TWU Local 100 head Roger Toussaint embraces MTA chairman Peter Kalikow after announcement of contract sellout.

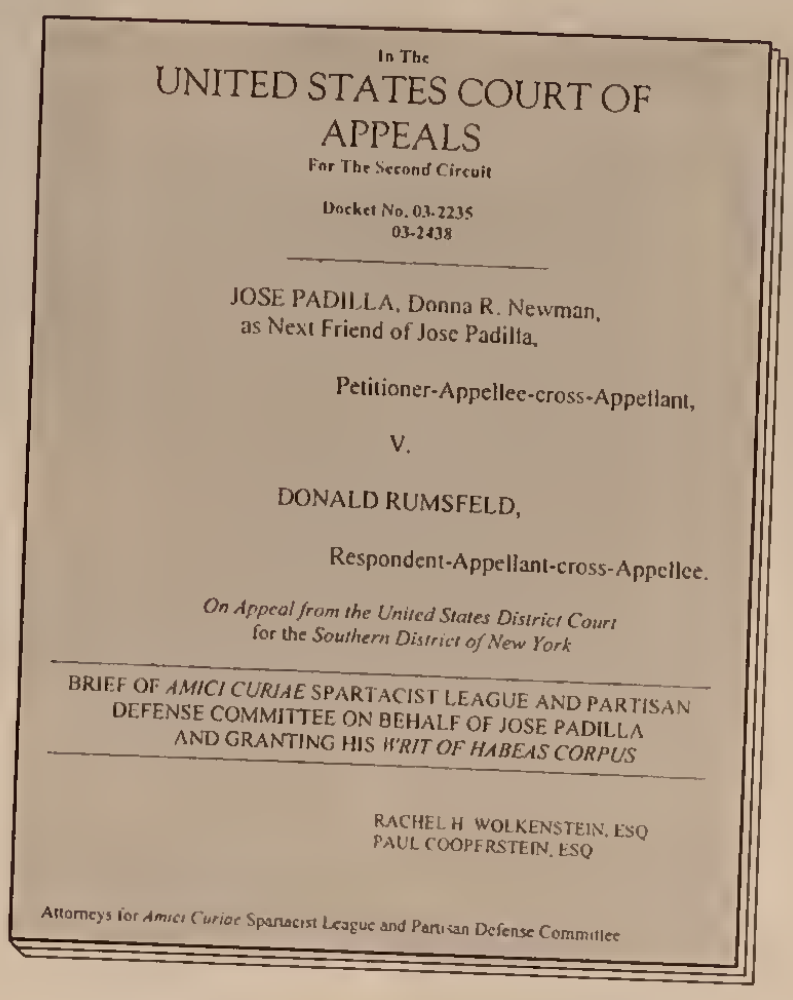
Marxists Oppose Government Attack on Citizenship Rights

On July 29, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee submitted to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit an *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief on behalf of Jose Padilla. An American citizen, Padilla was arrested on 8 May 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare airport and held as a "material witness" for a month before the Bush administration declared him an "enemy combatant" and shipped him off to a military brig in South Carolina. He remains there today without access to legal counsel, without charges being filed, without any prospect of a hearing or trial to challenge the accusations against him. The brief warns, "The Government seeks to institutionalize in the American justice system the arbitrary deprivation of rights that are the hallmarks of right-wing dictatorships propped up around the world by U.S. imperialism." The government is asserting its right to ***disappear citizens***.

The Marxist SL and the PDC, a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the SL, filed the brief because we are tenacious defenders of our legality and of those democratic rights won through bourgeois revolutions and revolutionary wars—the parliamentary partisans in the English Civil War, the U.S. Revolutionary War, the French Revolution and the American Civil War.

This legal brief is critical reading for defenders of immigrant rights, workers, fighters for black freedom and radical youth and all who seek to oppose the current all-sided attack on democratic rights. Using September 11 as a pretext, the government rounded up some 1,200 immigrants from Islamic countries, and enacted the Patriot Act and a panoply of executive orders under which the government's secret police have vastly expanded authority to tap your phone, search your home, scour your financial records, interrogate your librarian and place you under arrest without probable cause that a crime has been committed. And they're pushing for even greater repressive powers. The brief traces the evolution of the democratic rights under attack today and describes the history of government lies and slander to justify its wars abroad and repression at home, including pinning the "terrorist" label on leftist political opponents.

Centrally under attack in this case is the right of citizenship emerging from the defeat of the slavocracy in the American Civil War. The brief devotes an entire section to the development of citizenship rights in this country—the cumulative product of not only the American Revolution, but the Civil War and social struggles of the 19th and 20th centuries. It points out, "No aspect of citizenship is more fundamental than the rights accorded by the First Amendment," and traces how the government has consistently scrapped First Amendment protections in times of war or for "national security" in the face of revolutionary upheaval abroad or class struggle at home. In every case the courts dutifully tagged along.


In The
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
For The Second Circuit

Docket No. 03-2235
03-2438

JOSE PADILLA, Donna R. Newman,
as Next Friend of Jose Padilla,

Petitioner-Appellee-cross-Appellant,

V.

DONALD RUMSFELD,

Respondent-Appellant-cross-Appellee.

On Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Southern District of New York

BRIEF OF *AMICI CURIAE* SPARTACIST LEAGUE AND PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF JOSE PADILLA AND GRANTING HIS *WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS*

RACHEL H. WOLKENSTEIN, ESQ
PAUL COOPERSTEIN, ESQ

Attorneys for *Amici Curiae* Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee

The government's "justification" for the denial of constitutional protections for Padilla and the repressive measures implemented after September 11 is the putative "war against terrorism." Piercing this pretext, the brief states, "There is no war by any military definition. There is no shooting war and no battle between state powers. The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality.... It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

A consistent tool of government repression is to declare political opponents of government policy "terrorists," defining them as "outlaws" of civil society and providing the state with a license to suspend democratic rights, criminalize political activity and ultimately to engage in legalized murder. As we note, "It was the fate of the Black Panther Party (BPP) to be deemed a 'terrorist' organization and 'the greatest threat to internal security' by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and it was subjected to a Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) campaign of harassment, surveillance and prosecution; government agents killed some 38 members of the BPP."

The administration's evisceration of constitutional rights has been largely supported by the Democrats, whose main political bone to pick with Bush & Co. as the presidential campaign heats up is that the administration hasn't done enough for "homeland security." The brief cites the statement issued by the SL the day after the World Trade Center attack, which declared: "The ruling parties—Democrats and Republicans—are all too eager to be able to wield the bodies of those who were killed and wounded in order to reinforce capitalist class rule."

The "war on terror" has served as the pretext for U.S. imperialism's bombing of Afghanistan and bloody occupation of Iraq and for a war against the population at home. The domestic targets of this war, in the first instance, are immigrants particularly from Islamic/Arab countries, and ultimately minorities, blacks, labor and all perceived opponents of the government's policies. The government's objective is to smear, chill, inhibit, criminalize and penalize dissenting opinion and political action in opposition to government policy as threats to national security and support for terrorism. This was brought home with a vengeance on April 7 at the Port of Oakland, when, acting on "intelligence" in an anti-terrorism "advisory," riot-equipped police opened fire on legal observers, longshoremen, port truckers and antiwar protesters with wooden bullets and concussion grenades.

As the SL and PDC have stressed since the onset of the "war on terror," what the U.S. capitalist rulers get away with will largely depend on the level of social and class struggle in this society. It is in the urgent interests of the integrated labor movement to mobilize in defense of immigrant rights and the democratic rights of the entire population.

We reprint below the Summary which appears at the opening of the SL/PDC brief.

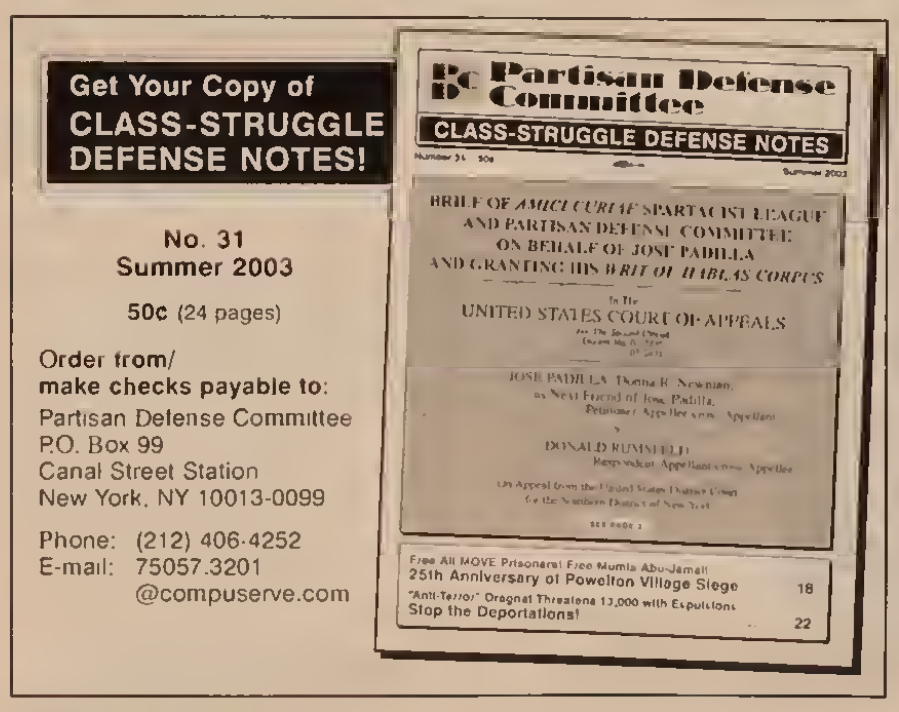
* * *

The issue in this case is whether the President has the authority, as Commander in Chief, to declare a United States citizen, detained in the United States outside a battlefield, an "enemy combatant" in the "war against terrorism" and indefinitely imprison him without bringing charges, holding a hearing, or allowing representation by counsel. Stripped of legalese, what the President asserts is nothing less than the right to disappear citizens.

The Executive has imposed martial law on Jose Padilla, a citizen, on the pretext of an alleged "war on terrorism" which is in fact not a military conflict but a political agenda. This is an unprecedented assertion of imperial powers by the President. The District Court's deference to the President's determination of Padilla's status as an enemy combatant relegates to the President the role of sole arbiter of the exercise and applicability of democratic, constitutional rights. This is consonant with the rationale of a police state.

The treatment of Padilla is intended as both the precursor and legal justification for application of Executive unilateral prerogatives on a broader scale, denying due process protections in criminal prosecutions, immigration proceedings and civil challenges to government policy. It is a frontal assault on the very concepts of due process and citizenship itself. Padilla is being forcibly expatriated, confined to a civil death. The imperial Presidency's objective is nullification of First Amendment rights and a qualitative diminution of all democratic rights. The target of the Executive is any and all perceived opponents of government policy, as evidenced most starkly by the secretly drafted legislation, the *Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003* (Patriot II), which would allow the Executive unchallengeable authority to strip citizenship from Americans who "provide material support" to an organization which at some time may be deemed "terrorist" by the U.S. government. Patriot II victims would be locked away indefinitely in military prison without any legal process.

The case of Jose Padilla tests the very existence of the fundamental rights of due process—liberty of the individual from the arbitrary, discriminatory power of the state—and the freedoms protected by the First Amendment. It poses the evisceration of the rights and privileges of citizenship embodied in the first ten Amendments to the Constitution and secured on the battlefield of the Civil War and in class and social struggle over the past hundred and more years. If the imperial President is upheld, Padilla's detention threatens to become the Dred Scott case of our time, a declaration that "Citizens have no rights that the government is bound to respect." ■



Pedophilia, Child Pornography and State Repression

Capturing the Friedmans: An American Tragedy

A Review by Burt Richardson

Andrew Jarecki's masterful film, *Capturing the Friedmans*, documenting the disintegration of a family after a man and his teenage son are wrongly accused of molesting young boys, is now in wide release after winning the Grand Jury Documentary Prize at Sundance 2003. This controversial film exposes the violence and hypocrisy of the capitalist state—cops, courts, laws—with its brutally honest picture of how two harmless individuals were framed up and jailed, guilty of nothing, accused of imaginary crimes, their lives and their family destroyed by an anti-sex witchhunt.

In 1987 a sting operation by the U.S. Postal Service entrapped Arnold Friedman, a high school teacher in Great Neck, Long Island, who'd been purchasing gay child pornography from the Netherlands through the mail. The investigators used the fact that Arnold also taught computer and piano to neighborhood kids at his home to accuse him of child molestation, since they equated looking at child porn with child abuse and "knew" he must be guilty of raping his students. Within days the cops were interviewing every former student, compelling parents to conjure up signs that their kids had been abused. Soon kids were coerced into saying what the cops and parents wanted to hear; parents of kids who'd denied being molested were shunned and told they were "in denial." Absurd charges of impossibly frequent and sadistic molestations snowballed into a 107-count indictment against Arnold Friedman and a 245-count indictment against 19-year-old Jesse, Arnold's youngest son, who had helped him in the classroom. After enormous pressure from his wife and attorney, Arnold pleaded guilty, in hopes that it would make things easier for Jesse in his trial; he was sentenced to 10 to 30 years. Realizing that there was no way he could win a trial, Jesse Friedman felt compelled to invent a story of sexual abuse by his dad just so he could plead guilty and be able to cut a deal in which he could get out of prison before his death. Arnold committed suicide in prison in 1995, riddled with guilt over somehow being responsible for his son's imprisonment. Jesse was eventually released on parole in 2001, after serving 13 years of a 16-year sentence.

The Third Great American Witchhunt

Arnold and Jesse Friedman were victims of America's third great witchhunt, the massive anti-sex panic that gripped the nation in the 1980s. This was a veritable witchhunt, much like the Salem witch trials of 1692 and the McCarthy anti-communist scare of the 1950s. Beginning in the late 1970s a mass panic, manipulated by the state in collusion with the religious fundamentalists and anti-sex feminists, engulfed society for well over a decade. People across the nation were led to believe that there was an epidemic of child molestations, satanic ritual abuse of children and sexual predators hiding behind every teacher's desk. Hundreds of men and women ended up behind bars for crimes that never happened, when the real criminals sat comfortably in their blue uniforms and black robes.

The most infamous of those cases was the McMartin Preschool case in Manhattan Beach, California, which began in 1983. Day-care workers were accused of engaging in satanic sex rituals with children (the case was portrayed in the powerful HBO movie *Indictment: The McMartin Trial*). During the six years of trials—during which the state failed to uncover a single piece of credible evidence—an intense hysteria rampaged through the country; many day-care centers were shut down due to child abuse allegations, and a generation of children was brought up to "identify" signs of child molestation, inducing kids to fear being touched by adults. From coast to coast, there was a series of vicious state prosecutions on charges of "satanic sex rings"; tales of "inappropriate touching" of genital areas and sodomy were laced with accounts of naked dancing, objects shoved up vaginas and anuses, robed figures spiriting children off in airplanes, ritual cannibalization of babies, the drinking of blood—all testimony from the mouths of children, some as young as two, who were invariably treated as unimpeachable witnesses. The accusations veered into the magical, feasting on Americans' appalling embrace of superstition and religious backwardness; soon the whole country had been taught to believe and even expect such things to be happening everywhere around them.

George Argeros

Long Island, May 1989: Arnold Friedman (right) and his 19-year-old son Jesse, victims of vicious anti-sex witchhunt, arrested on fabricated charges of child molestation.

Amidst this frenzy, a man like Arnold Friedman, who enjoyed looking at child pornography and was sexually attracted to boys, did not stand a chance once these maniacs got him in their clutches. As we at the time said in "The Uses of Abuse," "The violent abuse and rape of children is a terrible crime. The problem is that once the question of 'child abuse' has become a political football, the state willfully will not tell the difference between Jack the Ripper and Lewis Carroll" (*Women and Revolution* No. 29, Spring 1985). The bourgeois state foments these mass panics to promote "obedience" to its moral codes and regiment the population behind its agenda of social reaction. After the social upheaval of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s and the Vietnam War, the bourgeoisie was desperate to bottle it all up again.

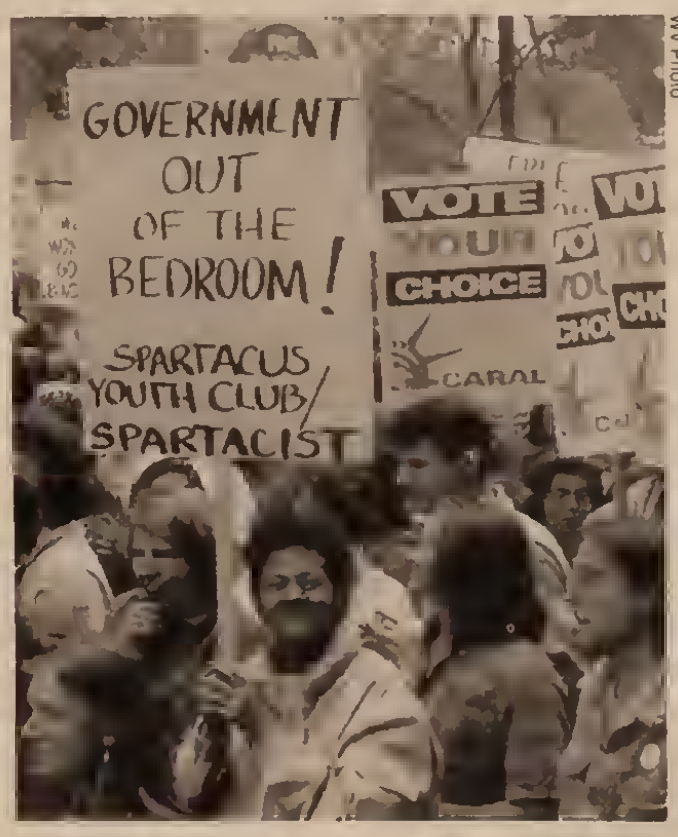
Documenting a Witchhunt in Real Time

Jarecki used a lot of home movie footage taken by David Friedman, Arnold's oldest son, during the events, as the media frenzy outside their cozy suburban home beat the drums to his father's and brother's arrest. He captures the unraveling of his own family, showing almost unbearable pain and sorrow, but also a willingness by him and his brothers, Jesse and Seth, to fight against the frame-up, understanding at the very least that Arnold's proclivities did not make him a rapist. The footage also shows how his mother, Elaine, doubted Arnold's innocence on the rape charges, since she believed Arnold was at least "guilty" of being a pedophile and possessing child porn. Jarecki intersperses David's footage with interviews he had with many of those involved, from cops to the judge to former students and their parents, to show eloquently how the accusations were a big web of lies engineered by the Nassau County Sex Crimes Unit to prove that this rather sweet old man was a violent sexual predator.

Arnold and Jesse were accused of engaging in forced anal sex with a plethora of kids, often in front of the whole class, using violence and verbal abuse, drawing blood and leaving them traumatized, yet the police could produce no physical evidence like bloody underwear or clothes—not even a bruise! No parents or children ever mentioned anything even remotely strange until the cops interrogated the kids about being abused. In the movie, Anthony Sgueglia, a detective with the Nassau County Sex Crimes Unit, allows that indeed "there was a dearth of physical evidence." He continues, "I don't even recall whether there was any physical evidence" to back up the preposterous claims. And preposterous they were: many of the kids who were supposed victims of violent abuse day after day re-enrolled in the class semester after semester. Jesse tells of one example, where a 10-year-old boy attended class once a week for ten weeks and testified to being forced to have anal and oral sex 31 times. Then the next year the same boy re-enrolled in the class—and for ten more classes he claimed to have had 41 sexual acts forced on him! One parent of a former student, whose child convinced him that nothing ever happened at the Friedmans', says that the police outright told his son, "We know what happened to you." And in an interview not shown in the movie, one of Friedman's former piano students says that the detectives told him he'd grow up gay if he didn't confess to being abused (*Village Voice*, 21 May).

In another series of interviews, a young man speaks of the horrors he was supposedly subjected to, seemingly corroborating the official account of the story. But then this "witness" gets embroiled in obvious contradictions in his testimony, until he admits that he no longer remembers any of the actual abuse, nor had he until a hypnotist made him realize he had been "repressing" traumatic memories. That's what the prosecutors used as "evidence"!

In fact, this "recovered memories" fad,



WV Photo

March for abortion rights, San Francisco, 1992. Marxists oppose reactionary "age of consent" laws.

used especially to "uncover" incestuous abuse and rapes, has been scientifically debunked. Jareeki interviews Debbie Nathan, a journalist who was contacted by the Friedman family because she was following other cases of supposed sexual abuse in the country at the time, and had become convinced, through inspecting the evidence and analyzing the testimonies, that people were being convicted for no reason at all. In her book, *Satan's Silence: Ritual Abuse and the Making of a Modern American Witch Hunt* (Debbie Nathan and Michael Snedeker [Basic Books, 1995], reviewed in "Satan, the State and Anti-Sex Hysteria," *W&R* No. 45, Winter-Spring 1996), she talks about the many cases where people were accused of satanic ritual abuse and child molestation based on children's fantastical testimonies that either were coerced or came after leading questioning that impressed on them what it was that the adults wanted to hear. Often parents or the cops, not satisfied with the kids' inability to think up horrifying abuses, would send them to disreputable "doctors" who'd use hypnosis to "unlock the doors" of their memories, as though the human brain were a molecular VCR where a simple push of the button could recover memories forgotten but never lost.

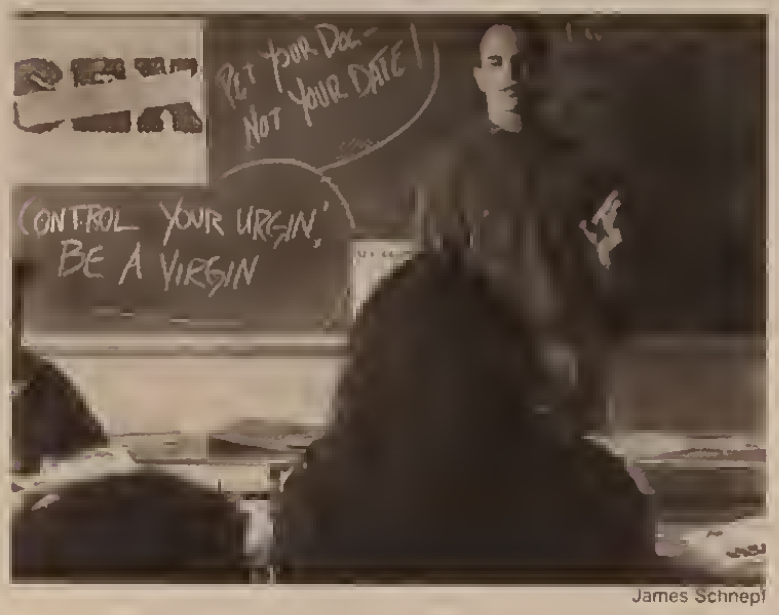
Child Porn: "Obscene" Is in the Eyes of the Beholder

In the press, this movie has generally received rave reviews, though the critics almost unanimously insist that viewers cannot know whether the Friedmans are guilty or innocent of the charges. Kenneth Turan, in an atypically negative review of the movie, lays this "ambiguity" bare: "But the fact that satanic orgies did not take place in Great Neck computer classes is not the same thing as saying that absolutely nothing anyone could object to took place" (*Los Angeles Times*, 13 June).

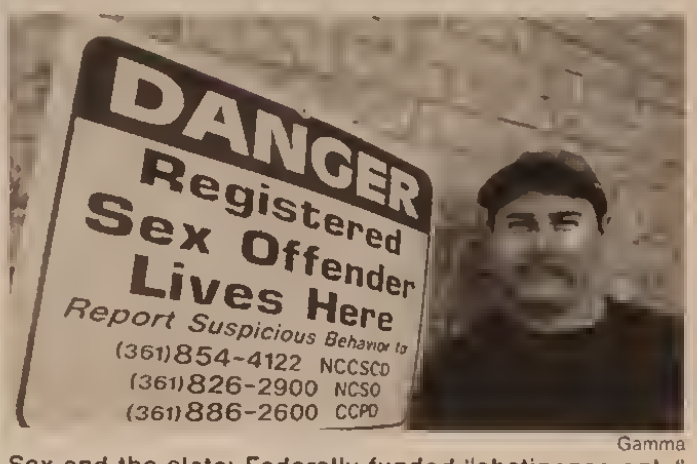
But Arnold Friedman committed no crime! The "crime" for which the state had substantiated proof was possession of child pornography. So what? Child pornography is, as is any kind of pornography, images and words intended for entertainment. Nothing more, nothing less. There's nothing wrong with getting off with visual aids, whether they portray naked women, young boys or monkeys going at it. One person's turn-on is another person's turn-off—who is going to decide what is "obscene"?

Until portions of the Child Pornography Control Act were recently struck down by the courts, it was illegal to show anyone who even *appeared* to be a minor in pornography. Currently the law defines any sexual depictions featuring at least one person who's under 18 as child pornography, irrespective of whether they have consented to having sex—or whether they even had sex to begin with, since such laws also cover "sexually suggestive" underage nudity!

Anti-pornography laws legitimize state censorship and interference in people's private lives. It's worth remembering that "obscenity" laws were used in this country for decades to ban the dissemination of birth control devices and information. And now that the "war on terror" is well under way, Attorney General John Ashcroft is focusing on "targeted obscenity prosecutions that will deter others from producing and distributing obscene material" (*Los Angeles Times*, 8 August). The Justice Department is charging Extreme Associates, a company that produces fantasy rape porn, with selling obscene material across state lines through the postal system—a federal crime in this Orwellian hellhole. The company's executives now each face 50 years in prison and $2.5 million in fines! *Drop the charges!*



James Schnepf



Gamma

Sex and the state: Federally funded "abstinence only" programs in public schools deny education on birth control, disease prevention (left). Laws that require publicizing whereabouts of "sex offenders" are incitement to terror.

Pedophilia: The Ultimate Taboo

Critics like Kenneth Turan want to claim that Arnold's admission of pedophilia means that something "objectionable" could have happened. But outside of the fantastic "recovered memories" recounted in the film, no child ever accused Arnold Friedman of sexual abuse. There is no evidence that his "sexually arousing experiences" with boys that took place *outside* the classroom (not related to the charges) were not consensual. The bigots seek to stigmatize all sexual encounters between adults and younger people as wrong by definition. They certainly don't have any problem looked at on a case by case basis. What matters is whether someone is forcing them to do anything they don't want to do with their own bodies.

The twisted nature of age of consent laws is exactly in denying the scientific fact that young people *are* sexual, and many are having sweaty, gratifying, *consensual* sex right now, as you read this. Those laws artificially specify an age at which kids—all kids—magically mature physically and mentally; one day you're terrified at your little boner, à la Jake Gyllenhaal in *Bubble Boy*; the next, you're a certified stud. But the human body is not a time-released sexual grenade. These laws are really about outlawing any sexual interaction for youth, preparing them for a life of repressed urges and unfulfilled desires. We are opposed to any such age of consent laws, a logical extension from our uncompromising opposition to any state intervention in the private realm of human relations. *Down with all reactionary age of consent laws! Government out of the bedroom!*

Anti-Sex Hysteria and the State

Although today news about "satanic abuse" no longer dominates the front pages as it did in the 1980s, many of the victims are still in jail, and the witchhunt's nationwide apparatus of sex cops, prying social workers and medical quacks, bolstered with millions of dollars, prestige and power, remains firmly in place. As we said in "Satan, the State and Anti-Sex Hysteria":

> "Much of this persecution aims to strengthen the bourgeois state in its regulation of the population and to spread panic as a diversion from the real brutality of life in this twisted, mean, bigoted, racist society. The Spartacist League has consistently opposed the outrageous intrusion of the government into private life, and demands an end to all laws against consensual 'crimes without victims' such as prostitution, drug use and pornography."

The state has absolutely no right to set limits, regulations or judgment on the private goings-on in people's lives. We reject the *a priori* criminalization of incest and have always fought against the vicious persecution of the North American Man/Boy Love Association, which defends the rights of adults and youth to mutually consensual sexual relations (see "Hands off NAMBLA! Reinstate Peter Melzer! Protest Thought Crime Firing of Teacher!" *WV* No. 807, 1 August).

Despite the propaganda that the state is there to mitigate problems in society as a neutral arbiter, as Marxists we know it exists solely to enforce the rule of one class, the bourgeoisie, over all others, especially the working class. The bourgeois state is not interested in protecting children, since it represents the system that denies them basic needs like food, shelter and education. After all, this is the same government that arrests their parents in racist "war on drugs" or "war on terrorism" campaigns, and above all enforces the class exploitation that creates the real misery in this world.

The state upholds in every way it can the inherently oppressive institution of the family, that horrible straitjacket of violence, misery, guilt and enforced moralism. But as this movie shows, of course the state *does* intervene all the time into the "sacred family," but only to instill further fear and respect for its own authority.

Those who appeal to the bourgeois state to come to the aid of the oppressed are helping legitimize and increase its repressive powers. When seven-year-old Megan Kanka was brutally murdered in a sadistic sexual assault in 1994, calls to strengthen the state's ability to go after such heinous crimes resulted in the nationwide set of so-called "Megan's Law," which Bill Clinton signed into law in 1996. That means that now "sex offenders" are required to register with local authorities, who then inform the neighborhood of where they live when they're released from prison—forevermore. The problem is, only a small fraction of those "sex offenders" are actual violent criminals. Jesse Friedman himself was at one point chased out of his apartment and became homeless for weeks after his neighbors were notified that he had been convicted of child molestation. In his insightful Web site, www.freejesse.net, he speaks of having to wear electronic ankle monitors that certify he is home by eight o'clock every night to abide by his curfew!

continued on page 7

Spartacist League/SYC Forums

Twelve Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

Saturday, Sept. 13, 4 p.m.
Circle Center, Room 713
750 S. Halsted Street, UIC

For more information: (312) 563-0441
e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

CHICAGO

Imperialist Occupation of Iraq: U.S. Troops Out Now!

Lessons of the Antiwar Movement

Saturday, Sept. 6, 3:30 p.m.
Immanuel Presbyterian Church
Geneva Room
3300 Wilshire Blvd.
(Wilshire/Vermont Redline Station)
For more information: (213) 380-8239
e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, Sept. 13, 3 p.m.
Centro del Pueblo
474 Valencia Street
San Francisco
(16th/Mission BART)
For more information: (510) 839-0851
e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

BAY AREA

SYC Events

BAY AREA

Meet the Marxists on Campus
Wednesday, September 3, 4 p.m.
Cesar Chavez Student Ctr., Rm. T-160
San Francisco State University
Information: (510) 839-0851
e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq! Canadian Troops Out of Afghanistan!
Saturday, September 20, 3 p.m.
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Room 8200
252 Bloor Street West
(above St. George Station)
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

ICL Web Site: www.icl-fi.org

Bill Logan: One Sick Puppy

BT: A Walking Provocation

In "BT: Renegades for Hire" (*WV* No. 807, 1 August), we documented the Bolshevik Tendency's role as a walking provocation against the Spartacist League and exposed the manipulative sociopath it embraces as its leader, Bill Logan. Defending its "chauvinism" slanders against our party, the BT replied with a letter posted on the Internet titled "The Truth Hurts" (8 August). It sure hurts them. Despite being at the center of the events they distorted to spin their lies, Logan, the *líder maximo* of the BT since 1990, still remains the black hole in their latest "reply."

As detailed in our last article, in a "postscript" to its 12 June letter nominally on the Kurdish question, the BT presented a short quote dragged out of context from a presentation the SL's national chairman, Jim Robertson, made ***25 years ago*** to our New York local. Reporting on the party's fight to remove the brutal and nasty regime Logan had been running as leader of our British section and the manifold ways in which Logan manipulated the internalized oppression of particularly young women and minority comrades, Robertson raised a criticism of a leading comrade, Reuben Samuels, for absenting himself from this fight:

> "Criticism of Reuben: the whole time, where was Reuben? He was off in the library, studying about the Turds for his class. Right? He wasn't playing any role. George and I looked at each other and we said, 'We don't think it's going to be exactly the kind of educational weekend that we had in mind...'. We're going back next month to have the educational. Good educational."

As we wrote in our last article, "Only in the minds of those genuinely inspired by chauvinism could 'turds' be seen as referring to Kurds!" For all its oh-so-indignant and consummately disingenuous charges of "vulgar chauvinism," the BT introduces this quote by saying, "Robertson teased Samuels for having been left out of the loop and missing the excitement." Far from teasing, this was a serious indictment of a senior leader of our international for having his head in the toilet when what was posed was a fight to save our British section from Logan. Now the BT opines that the proof that we are covering for "vulgar chauvinism" is demonstrated by the fact that our last article didn't mention that Samuels "had been flown in from Toronto specifically to give his talk on the Kurds." The latter is absolutely correct. Robertson and the rest of the international leadership saw to it that our best-informed comrade on the question, Samuels, flew to London, not once but twice, in order to give a "good educational" on the struggle against Kurdish oppression—a need particularly posed by the recent recruitment of Turkish comrades to our British section. And that's what the BT calls "chauvinism."

More than a hundred opinionated, argumentative young communists of many different ethnic backgrounds heard Robertson's presentation. They understood it for what it was: a powerful indictment of the all-sided oppression of capitalist class society, and a record of the struggle against a sick character who tried to destroy comrades. Those who were in the room recall being elated at the end of the report, because we had won a fight to save our British section and prevented a serious setback in our struggle to build an international. To assert that a hundred communists would not have reacted with hostility and indignation to a chauvinist slur is a slander of all of our comrades. To believe the BT, the members of the International Communist League to whom it makes its unctuous appeals to break with the ICL are worthless as any kind of communists but are rather merely obedient tools, fools and perhaps racists themselves. But then what does that make the BT's own "founder-leaders," who were around at the time of Robertson's New York presentation and said not a peep? They indict themselves on the charges they falsely fling at us.

For the 20 years of its existence, the BT has specialized in lying diatribes against our organization. The bulletin containing Robertson's presentation was made publicly available by us over two decades ago. Yet only now has the BT surfaced its "recovered memory" that the fight against Logan was really a cover for anti-Kurdish chauvinism.

Bill Logan's Web site (left). Dante's Inferno (below).

Gustave Doré

In our article last issue, we noted that the BT had omitted any mention of Logan either in its "P.S." or in a 4 July leaflet titled "Robertson's Vulgar Chauvinism" distributed for the benefit of Stalinophobic thugs and Spartacist-haters at the British Socialist Workers Party's "Marxism" event in London. The BT couldn't even manage to give the main title of the *International Discussion Bulletin* it quoted from, "On the Logan Regime Part I." "Why has Logan become the equivalent of that empty space on retouched photos?" we asked. "What is the BT hiding?"

The BT's latest letter mentions Logan's name a few times in passing, including the enigmatic statement that Robertson "had decided to topple the Logan regime." Why was Logan "toppled"? Not a word. The BT is also silent on the monstrous crimes that were reported by comrades in our Australian section, where Logan had previously been national chairman, once the lid had been pried open by the fight in Britain. Logan willfully broke up couples and pressured comrades into sexual relationships. He pressured a young comrade to have an abortion, and when she refused, he made her put the child in a foster home, ultimately driving her to an attempted suicide. We convoked a trial body at our first international conference in the summer of 1979. Logan was expelled by a unanimous vote of the membership (including, again, those who would later form the BT). We made our bulletins on the Logan regime public in order to warn the rest of the workers movement about this sociopath.

The BT did not respond to our exposure of Logan's current vocation as a New Age snake oil salesman who peddles his grotesque services—as a "celebrant" and "counsellor" for baby funerals and "partnership break-up" among other things—on his Web site (hl.co.nz), which also features a link to a "Folksong Index" where you can listen to such "folk" classics as "Deutschland Über Alles," "The Swastika Song" and "Come All Ye that Hold True Communion with Southern Confederates Bold"! Here is a leader of a putative "Bolshevik" organization whose Web site speaks not of the influences of Marx, Lenin or Trotsky but of the "Anglican and Presbyterian influences of my childhood."

Now, as part of its escalating provocations, the BT claims that our last polemic "recalls the 1973 pronouncements of Lyndon LaRouche (then known as Lynn Marcus) when he was winding up his devotees for their 'Operation Mop Up' vendetta against the Communist Party." "Operation Mop-Up" was a campaign of murderous violence against Communist Party supporters by the LaRouchites as the latter exited the workers movement on their way to the fascistic right and links with various state agencies. So the BT is insinuating that we're crazed thugs and on our way out of the workers movement altogether.

We wrote in the 1987 SL/U.S. national conference document:

> "The tiny Bolshevik Tendency (formerly External Tendency) composed largely of embittered Reagan-years quitters from the SL is not so much an opponent as a sinister threat of provocation. The Bolshevik Tendency (BT) exhibits an apparent disinterest in questions of importance to the working class except to go after the SL....
> "Mainly the BT is a highly dubious and potentially extremely dangerous pest of the COINTELPRO type."

In the Editorial Statement we published last issue, we acknowledged our mistake in excising the BT's "P.S." rather than exposing it for the contemptible lie it is when we published the exchange "BT Doth Whine Too Much" (*WV* No. 806, 4 July). In this statement, the BT can see only a "mea culpa" and a "public slapdown of the editorial board." The idea of basic communist honesty and integrity, the fundamental concept of speaking the truth and openly admitting a mistake to the working-class public, is something wholly alien to the BT charlatans. For them, it is simply evidence of "Obedience Training in the SL," as they called it in their luridly anti-communist 1985 account of the supposed Spartacist gulag, "The Road to Jimstown," a reference to Jonestown, Guyana, where a religious cult under Reverend Jim Jones carried out a mass suicide in 1978. In their latest letter, they write that the SL is a cult whose "central organizing principle is that founder/leader Robertson can never be wrong (unless he says so)." This is beyond stupid—since when do cult leaders admit to being wrong?

The BT acknowledges that the ICL preserved "the thread of revolutionary continuity after the degeneration of Cannon's party," i.e., the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, but claims that we in turn have degenerated. Well, we wrote in "From Cream Puffs to Food Poisoning" (*WV* No. 349, 2 March 1984): "Yes, comrades of the ET, sooner or later and if we do not take state power first, a revolutionary Marxist organization outlives the effective political lifetime of its founding cadre; the defense of the party's original purpose and intent characteristically involves organizational discontinuity (i.e., split on behalf of the new revolutionary generation). But not yet for us, ETs, and in any case you stand in no relationship to that process." That was in 1984; today you stand among the enemies of revolutionary Marxism and of working-class victory. ■

Special ICL Bulletins

On the Logan Regime
(Three parts)

In 1979, Bill Logan was expelled from the international Spartacist tendency for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate human decency." Logan is now the leader of the "International Bolshevik Tendency." As a service to the workers movement we have made our international bulletins documenting Logan's crimes publicly available.

Part I	$3 (82 pages)
Part II	$3 (44 pages)
Part III	$3 (79 pages)

The International Bolshevik Tendency—What Is It?

International Communist League pamphlet, August 1995

$1 (10 pages)

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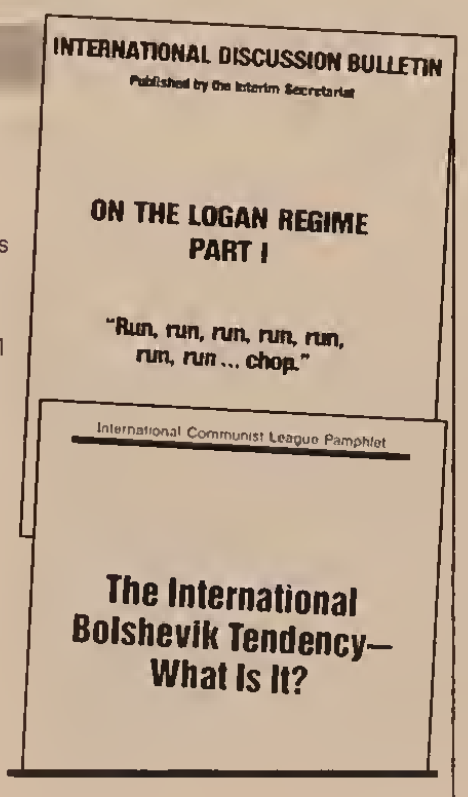

Con Artists Get Conned

Chickens Come Home to Roost in Kiev

A couple of years ago, a plethora of opportunist "internationals" proclaimed their new Ukrainian sections on the Internet. We smelled a rat. Now, a new round of announcements has appeared on the Internet by many of these groups complaining they'd been hoodwinked. Typical was the following admission by the Bolshevik Tendency (BT) in a 21 August statement titled "IBT Conned in Kiev":

> "The International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT) is one of a number of left-wing organizations fooled by a gang of con artists in Kiev, who fraudulently posed as supporters of different international political tendencies....
> "We have established, beyond any doubt, that the same collection of people presented themselves as multiple groups, each with an international affiliation."

On the same day, the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) Web site confessed that they also had been conned, writing that "a group of purported 'revolutionaries' in Ukraine has perpetrated a fraud upon at least ten far left organizations internationally, and probably far more." An earlier admission was posted by the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

A "Cast List" on the BT's Web site names five of their Ukrainian "comrades" as simultaneously belonging to the putative Ukrainian section of Jan Norden's Internationalist Group/League for the Fourth International. As *WV* closes, the Nordenites have said nothing. By various accounts, other international patrons of the Ukrainian Potemkin village included the British Workers Power and Alliance for Workers' Liberty groups and the News & Letters group and DeLeonist Socialist Labor Party in the U.S. One thing that all accounts seem to agree on is that Oleg Vernik, long the leader of the Taaffeite Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) group in Ukraine, is a central figure in the scandal. Since early August, a statement has been circulating on various Internet sites, purportedly in the name of the Committee for a Workers' International, claiming that their Ukrainian section has been suspended, pending an investigation.

We are not privy to the sleazy details, and we have no confidence in anybody's account of what happened. But by their own words these so-called "victims" stand condemned as utter frauds and co-conspirators with their Kiev con men! Now they scream, "We wuz robbed!" But they were more than happy to perpetrate their con on the left public by trumpeting their fraudulent Ukrainian sections. Proclaiming the Ukrainian "fusion" as the centerpiece of its "Third International Conference" two years ago, the BT sang the praises of its supposed comrades for their "grasp of the complexities of the national question" and for "seriously studying the issues confronted by revolutionaries during the past six decades."

For its part, the LRP loudly crowed that "joining forces with a large group of young revolutionary workers from the former Soviet Union, the land of the Russian Revolution, is an inspiring step. It confirms our confidence in the correctness of our struggle" ("RWO-Ukraine Joins COFI," *Proletarian Revolution* No. 67, Spring 2003). The LRP boasted:

> "The RWO is now, after the CWI and LRCI [Workers Power's international], the third-largest left group in Ukraine (outside of the open Stalinists). The RWO consists of several dozen workers not only in the center in Kiev, but also with groups of several workers each in no less than half-a-dozen other key cities."

It all brings to mind the movie *Billion Dollar Brain*, where a group of Baltic hustlers sucker a Texas billionaire into a plot to invade the Soviet Union. These cyberspace internationals who conduct fusions in virtual reality didn't care what their "sections" were actually doing in Ukraine—what they wanted was a new Internet address to impress unwary people far away from the scene of the crime. The BT still hasn't even bothered to remove documents from their Ukrainian and Russian Web pages that they now denounce as fraudulent!

W.C. Fields once observed that "You can't cheat an honest man." Con men prey on desperate people and those who want something for nothing. These phony "internationals" obviously never so much as bothered to ask if anybody in Ukraine or Russia had ever heard or seen their Ukrainian "section." The BT now says it noticed its Ukrainian group's "failure to produce any substantial original propaganda, and the marked absence of internal political and perspectives documents," moaning that "we certainly could have moved sooner to tighten up what appeared to be a largely dysfunctional organization." And the LRP now meekly confesses that "reports and articles that we have published by or about the RWO of Ukraine, as well as its affiliate, the RWO of Russia, are at best unreliable." The LRP lamely adds, "Its 'members' and 'leaders,' some of whom we had met more than once [!], were part of the overall scam."

Perhaps we should congratulate the Ukrainian con artists for having the perspicacity to see that these disparate groups belong together. All these renegades unite around the rejection of Trotskyism on the Russian question and they unite in slanders and hatred for the Spartacists. We follow James P. Cannon's injunction in his 1939 "Speech on the Russian Question" (*The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*): "'Who touches the Russian question, touches a revolution.' Therefore, be serious about it. Don't play with it."

In contrast to the Potemkin village bargain hunters, we fought to the last barricades against Yeltsin-Bush capitalist counterrevolution and fought to build a real organization in the USSR. And we paid the price. The Kremlin bureaucracy and then the capitalist regimes that replaced it knew the ICL was for real and witchhunted us with a vengeance. Our comrades were arrested, terrorized, attacked and hounded by the fascists and Stalinists alike. In 1992 the senior leader of the ICL's Moscow Station, Martha Phillips, was murdered at her post; the authorities stonewalled while we tried in vain to find out who killed her. In 1995, we were repressed and officially banned from Ukraine.

Precisely because we are serious about the question of revolution and forging a truly democratic-centralist International on a solid programmatic basis, we suspected something was up when this "Cambrian explosion" in Kiev first emerged two years ago. On 20 August 2001, an ICL comrade from the former East German (DDR) deformed workers state with extensive political experience in Ukraine noted in a letter:

> "I wonder whether P. and his lieutenant got access to the internet and posted on EBay something like 'Trotskyist group in Ukraine for sale. Make your financial offers to the following email address.' P. certainly was keen on getting money and I wonder whether he's the Ukrainian section of WP, ITO [International Trotskyist Organization], IG and BT at once."

The ICL sent an e-mail dated 31 August 2001 to Oleg Vernik in Kiev to see if he could provide any information on the sudden emergence of numerous new "Trotskyist" groups in Ukraine. Vernik apparently knew who were likely customers for what he was selling and who weren't; he never replied to our letter.

WV Graphic

For all their protestations of being "shocked, shocked," this is hardly the first time the anti-Spartacist opportunists have knowingly bought tainted goods. In March 1990, the German section of the ICL issued a public warning about a couple of ex-DDR hustlers who had left our organization, taking with them various assets, including a car and money. The BT's German allies, the GIVI, rushed to embrace these bandits, even issuing a joint May Day statement with them. A few weeks later, the GIVI announced a break in relations, complaining that "principles of the revolution were sold for a contemptible petty-bourgeois project" in which "a lot of party money is involved." What made these hustlers irresistible to the BT in the first place was their shared anti-Spartacism. At the 1990 Lutte Ouvrière Fete in Paris, the GIVI circulated a letter that makes clear what attracted them to these elements:

> "The stand taken for workers democracy against the bureaucratic Robertson regime, your subsequent rightful actions against the ICL slanders—these were your only connection to Trotskyism."

Today the BT complains that their Kiev partners in crime "are so thoroughly corrupted and cynical that they can only serve as an instrument for the enemies of the workers movement." Well, they should know!■

Friedmans...

(continued from page 5)

The bourgeois state will not refrain from using its armed thugs, the cops, to make sure no deviation, ideological or moral, is permitted in the private lives of citizens. The very existence of sex crimes units in police departments is a graphic reminder of that. It's enough to note that, until the Supreme Court ruling this summer that voided all anti-sodomy laws, many of these great "democratic" United States considered it criminal for gay adults to have sex. The government works hand in hand with the religious right wing to promote abstinence-only campaigns, seeking to ensure that teenagers who don't conform to their puritanical norm are maximally punished with unwanted pregnancies, lack of access to abortion and vulnerability to AIDS.

Today teenagers suspected of being gay are forced into therapy or boot camps to "convert," while 9-year-old boys are charged with sexual assault for fondling their classmates, and juveniles are being locked up for statutory rape. Children are simply not allowed to touch one another, while any affectionate adult/child interactions are completely stigmatized. Today with the Internet a new "thought police" has been formed with cops luring unsuspecting pedophiles into setting up dates with imaginary teens to arrest them on "child molestation" charges—think about it, now you can be charged with an imaginary crime against an imaginary victim! Talk about *Minority Report*—dystopia, thy name is America. And even in Hollywood such sexual persecutions continue, with Roman Polanski, the acclaimed director of *The Pianist*, unable to set foot in this country this past spring to accept his Academy Award because of a warrant for his arrest for statutory rape of a 13-year-old girl who *consented* to having sex with him 25 years ago (see "Stop the Puritan Witchhunt Against Roman Polanski!" *WV* No. 192, 10 February 1978).

Free the Victims! Overturn the Trials!

If this were just a simple movie review, I'd say that this was one of the best movies of the year. But precisely because *Capturing the Friedmans* is not a work of fiction, but the tragic portrayal of a real family's destruction by the bourgeois state's sinister forces and motives, it's one of the most depressing movies you could see. If anything, it's a powerful indictment of this rotten, oppressive society—and an even more powerful impetus to fight for a different world where someone like Arnold Friedman would not have felt compelled to live a miserable life, hiding and burying his most intimate desires, to fit into a pre-determined mold that does not take into account the true possibilities of human sexual expression. We can only hope that Jesse Friedman can get his life back, some peace of mind, and hopefully lots of money from Nassau County for wrongful imprisonment. But the fight is still on to free the countless others who are still in jail, rotting away for crimes they did not commit, and to defend those under attack by the never-ending searches, porn dragnets, entrapments and state harassment for consensual sexual activities. *Overturn the trials! Free the victims!*■

Women and Revolution
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Liberia...

(continued from page 1)

disdain. But Payne's purpose in condemning racism with regard to sending troops to Liberia is to help strengthen and extend the global reach of American imperialism. It's like complaining that the U.S. ruling class does nothing to stop the KKK when many of this country's police forces are infested with Klan types.

Black Democratic politicos claim, of course, to speak on behalf of all blacks. However, the *New York Times* (3 August) cites an opinion poll by that newspaper showing that, when asked if the U.S. should intervene "to change a dictatorship to democracy," "82 percent of African-American respondents wanted America to mind its own business, as opposed to 58 percent of all others." The *Times* observed: "For some African-Americans, distrust of the Pentagon is palpable. Blacks, they say, end up fighting other men's wars." Indeed, in order to escape the hellish conditions of the inner-city ghettos, young black men and women have joined the U.S. armed forces in disproportionate numbers.

Why are leading black Democrats pushing so hard for U.S. military intervention in Liberia? The Democratic Party, no less than the Republicans, represents this country's capitalist ruling class which requires military forces abroad to protect and further its global interests. In this regard, the particular role of black Democrats is to convince blacks to support U.S. global military power, in other words, American imperialism. To do that they maintain the U.S. armed forces can and should be used to protect the lives and livelihood of oppressed and impoverished dark-skinned peoples around the world, especially in Africa.

We've heard all this before from the same parties. Let's look back at the last U.S. military intervention in Africa, in Somalia in 1992-93. Initiated by Bush Sr. and continued by his Democratic successor Bill Clinton, this was presented as a purely "humanitarian" mission. Operating under the banner of the UN, American, European and Asian troops (dubbed "peacekeepers") were there, it was said, to prevent evil Somali "warlords" from stealing international food aid to this famine-stricken East African country.

When the U.S. Marines first landed in Somalia, we wrote: "U.S. rulers, Republican and Democrat alike, are using starving black babies in Somalia as a backdrop to assert American hegemony in a 'New World Order'" ("U.S. Out of Africa!", *WV* No. 567, 15 January 1993). Within a few months, U.S. helicopter gunships had turned the streets of Mogadishu into a killing field while Belgian troops gunned down hundreds in the port of Kismayu and Canadian soldiers subjected Somalis to sadistic tortures. Finally, in October a Somali clan militia successfully ambushed an elite unit of U.S. Rangers, killing 18. (This incident was recently dramatized in the Hollywood film *Black Hawk Down*.) Public opinion in the U.S. then turned sharply against the Somalia adventure, and Clinton pulled the U.S. troops out.

To minimize the risk of American casualties in Liberia, Bush & Co., in complete agreement with the black Democrats, are mainly using troops from the Nigerian-dominated Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Nigerian and other ECOWAS forces are a gang of mercenary butchers. The liberal Human Rights Watch group documented, from eyewitness accounts, atrocities committed by ECOWAS forces when they intervened in Sierra Leone in 1999:

> "Wounded rebels were dragged from their beds and executed within the hospital grounds, or shot directly in their beds or as they tried to flee on crutches and in wheelchairs. Others were executed in the morgue where they were caught trying to hide among the corpses."
>
> —*Washington Post*, 5 August

AP

1992: U.S./UN "humanitarian" mission in Somalia meant racist imperialist terror.

Reuters

Children in Liberia. Poverty, starvation and disease: the reality under imperialist domination.

Africa Ravaged in Post-Soviet World

Since the destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 removed the restraint of any countervailing force, U.S. imperialism has launched one invasion after another. In 1991, as the USSR began to crumble, the Pentagon's arsenal of death and destruction was unleashed against Iraq in the first Gulf War. Then came the racist occupations of Somalia and Haiti, the 1999 U.S./NATO war against Serbia and this year's invasion and colonial occupation of Iraq. The justification par excellence for imperialist intervention—rescuing their colonial subjects from the consequences of "failed states"—is simply the modern version of Rudyard Kipling's "white man's burden." As revolutionary internationalists, we say: ***U.S. and all imperialist forces out of Africa! U.S. imperialism, get your bloody hands off the world!***

Across Africa, the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state meant that regimes which during the Cold War had been able to garner economic and military aid by playing off Moscow and Washington were now left without a dime. The International Monetary Fund, an economic arm of U.S. imperialism, was free to demand debt repayment on starvation terms from black African countries, leading to the wholesale destruction of the fragile economies of those societies. This, in turn, exacerbated existing national, tribal and clan rivalries, leading to almost continuous warfare throughout the continent, supplemented by tribal and clan massacres.

In sending U.S. troops to Liberia, Bush spoke of the "unique history of the United States and Liberia." This despicable history began in 1816, when the interests of Northern bourgeois liberals and some Southern slaveholders converged as they organized the shipping of black freedmen from the North and manumitted slaves to West Africa. The American black colonists and their descendants then subjugated and exploited the indigenous African peoples. In the 1920s, the Firestone Rubber Co. effectively bought Liberia and ran it like a slave plantation. During the Cold War, Liberia served as the main base of the U.S. in West Africa. From its headquarters in Monrovia, the CIA ran agents, subverted governments and organized coups throughout the continent. But with the destruction of the Soviet Union, Liberia ceased to have any strategic importance for Washington.

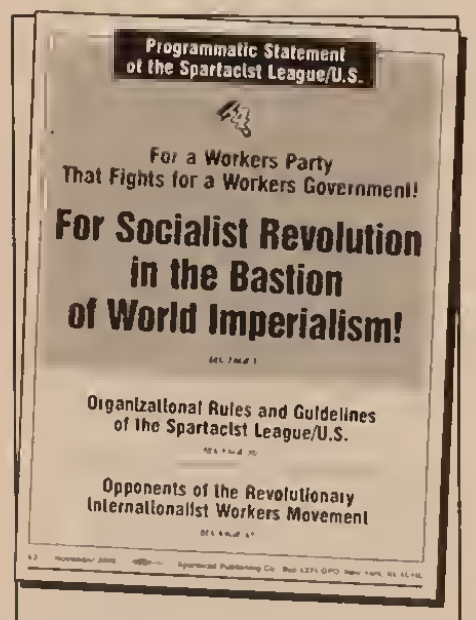
While the Bush gang initially had not much interest in sending U.S. troops to Liberia, they have since incorporated this operation into their plans for dominating the West African region. The *Mail and Guardian* (11 July) reported on "a recent strategic decision to increase the United States' military presence to bolster what Washington now sees as two important national interests on the continent—the supply of oil and the struggle against terrorism." Of particular interest to Washington is Nigeria—a major supplier of oil to the U.S.—with the Pentagon reportedly also discussing setting up military bases in Ghana, Senegal, Mali and Equatorial Guinea. This sets up a sharpening of rivalries between the U.S. and France, for whom control of its former empire in sub-Saharan Africa is seen as key to its pretension of being more than a third-rate imperialist power. On June 14, the French daily *Le Parisien*, under the headline "The Great Return of France to Africa" published a map showing the distribution of 11,000 troops across more than half a dozen African countries.

The fact that the U.S. intervention in Liberia is being carried out under the banner of a UN Security Council resolution in no way changes its nature as a colonial occupation. The UN is a den of imperialist thieves and their victims which represents the interests of the dominant world power, the U.S., and its allies. For example, the U.S. military intervention in Congo in the early 1960s was carried out under cover of a UN resolution. The CIA engineered the overthrow of left nationalist prime minister Patrice Lumumba, who was then assassinated by Washington's Congolese henchmen, Moise Tshombe and Mobutu Sese Seko. It is notable that Olusegun Obasanjo, the current Nigerian president, served in the UN "peacekeeping" mission that oversaw Lumumba's assassination.

In a 1964 speech, Malcolm X captured the hypocrisy of imperialist "humanitarianism" as he tore into the American media for covering up Washington's atrocities in Congo:

> "You won't write that American planes are blowing the flesh from the bodies of black women and black babies and black men. No. Why? Because they're American planes. As long as they're American planes, that's humanitarian."

The atrocities committed by American imperialism in Africa and elsewhere are intended to maintain the capitalist system based on the brutal exploitation of workers and rural toilers throughout the world. What is necessary is the overthrow of this barbaric system, which has reduced Africa to starvation, chronic warfare and disease. But for countries such as Liberia—indeed, for much of the African continent—social and economic backwardness is such that there does not exist an industrial working class, the force which uniquely has the social power and the class interest to lead the assault on capitalism. The liberation of Africa must be linked to the international struggle of the working class for socialist revolution. Here an exceptionally important role will be played by the descendants of those black Africans who centuries ago were taken into slavery in North America. Black workers in the United States form a ***strategically important component of the American proletariat*** which can and must destroy the ultimate stronghold of capitalist imperialism ***from within***.■



Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

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CORRECTIONS

In "U.S./British Troops Out of Iraq Now!" (*WV* No. 807, 1 August), we referred to the fabrication of a North Vietnamese naval assault on U.S. forces as the "1965 Gulf of Tonkin 'incident'." The nonexistent "Bay of Tonkin attack" was claimed to have taken place on 2 August 1964 and the subsequent Congressional Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which authorized massive escalation in U.S. bombing and troops in Vietnam, was approved five days later.

In "BT: Renegades for Hire" in the same issue, we omitted the word "about" (as well as a comma) in quoting from a 1978 speech by Spartacist League National Chairman James Robertson on the ouster of Bill Logan from the leadership of our British section. The complete quotation is, "Criticism of Reuben: the whole time, where was Reuben? He was off in the library, studying about the Turds for his class. Right? He wasn't playing any role." Also, the article "For Workers Revolution in Iran!" displayed a *Workers Vanguard* headline "Down with the Shah! Don't Bow to Khomeini!" with the date 17 November 1978. The correct date of the issue was 15 December 1978. The article also incorrectly dated a July 9 demonstration in Toronto as June 9.

In *WV* No. 806 (4 July), the article "U.S. Troops Out of Iraq! Down With the Colonial Occupation!" incorrectly stated that African immigrant Ousmane Zongo was killed by the NYPD in Harlem. A resident of Harlem, Ousmane Zongo was killed in a Chelsea warehouse.

Class Struggle...

(continued from page 1)

American capitalism's bedrock of anti-black racism. You should carefully read the new newsletter of the LBL (July 2003) and the PDC's *Class Struggle Defense Notes*, as well as our main party publication, *Workers Vanguard*.

In a recent debate with our party, the centrist League for the Revolutionary Party referred to these fraternal revolutionary organizations as "Spartacist front groups." Our party, the Spartacist League, does not hide its Marxist program behind front groups with more moderate or partial programs. These fraternal organizations embody a twofold intent: first, our party's commitment to employ the united-front tactic in a class-against-class fight against the racist American ruling class; and second, to establish conscious collaboration with all class fighters who support the Marxist program, but are unable to join the ranks of the revolutionary party. Read our publications, discuss and work with us: you will see that we are what we say we are—nothing more, nothing less.

As for the LRP, it denounces its political grandfather, the renegade Max Shachtman, and embraces his main political opponent, the American Trotskyist James Cannon, but seeks to remain in the "third camp" family of its grandfather, Max Shachtman. Shachtman must be muttering in his grave, "How sharper than a serpent's tooth is an ungrateful child."

James Cannon was also the organizer of the International Labor Defense. The Partisan Defense Committee bases itself on the traditions and principles of the ILD, championing cases that are in the interest of the working class as a whole with a non-sectarian defense. Cannon spoke well about the cause that passes through prisons. That cause is the struggle of the workers and oppressed to defend social gains and to make new social gains under an oppressive class society. Freedom isn't free, as they used to say in the heroic civil rights movement. Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost class-war prisoner, won a reprieve from death, but now faces the "living death" of life imprisonment. The big-name liberals have fled his defense. The big-name liberal lawyers have sought to sabotage his defense. The reformist socialists who looked to the liberals for political guidance are now inactive in his defense. From the very start of Mumia's defense, the PDC sought to mobilize forces larger than ourselves—to make known the name and eloquence of the little-known Mumia Abu-Jamal to the world's working class. We succeeded in this work, but victory, the freeing of this innocent man, is not at hand.

AFP

June protest in Baghdad during which two Iraqis were killed by U.S. troops.

WV Photo

13 May 2000: Revolutionary contingent built by SL, SYC and LBL at San Francisco rally in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

This year's annual PDC/LBL picnic fund-raiser collection will go to Mumia's defense fund—every penny of it. Please contribute generously. Every contribution, no matter how modest, is a statement of solidarity with those who have paid the price for our cause—the cause that passes through prisons.

The "cause that passes through prisons" must rally all class-war defenders and fighters in the current period of anti-immigrant witchhunts, war on blacks and labor. The LBL/PDC organized a labor-centered, united-front demonstration in Oakland on February 9, 2002 that demanded: "Down with the anti-immigrant witchhunt! Anti-terrorist laws target immigrants, blacks and labor! No to the USA-Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act!" On a small scale we showed how a revolutionary party would fight to mobilize class forces, independent of the ruling class parties, the Democrats and Republicans, to fight racist repression in the struggle for a workers America. Our international comrades have reported on the impact of this demonstration on class-conscious workers abroad, witnessing American workers protesting the chauvinism of their own rulers. The past period of antiwar demonstrations included mass arrests, the April 7 Oakland cop assault on protesters and longshoremen, the heavy-handed cop and school administration treatment of minority and black youth. This is on top of the government's plans for the mass deportation of thousands of immigrants. All this repression is part of the cause that passes through prisons. I urge you to stand at your post in defense of our class and allies—an injury to one is an injury to all!

When Paul Bremer, the chief overseer of the U.S. occupation of Iraq, arrived in the country, he was wearing a business suit with military combat boots. I thought that this odd dress was some fluke—perhaps he had a problem with his regular dress shoes and had to borrow a pair of boots. But this was not the case. This odd dress is Bremer's trademark "fashion statement." It goes along nicely with the so-called "embedded" American journalists dressed in head-to-toe military fatigues. And then there was Bush the Chickenhawk landing on an aircraft carrier in full military combat garb. Commenting on the rising world dominance of American imperialism, Trotsky characterized the American rulers as a very provincial people who liked to issue commands. He wondered how many of the American capitalist leaders even knew the geography of the Europe they sought to lord it over. He predicted that the British imperialist rulers, a more sophisticated and cultured ruling class, would offer themselves up as paid tutors to the Americans as the Americans crowded them, as well as the other European ruling classes, out of their share of world power.

We are living in the epoch of imperialist decay, an epoch of wars and revolutions, and we revolutionary Marxists oppose the predatory aims of the capitalist imperialist powers, above all our own ruling class. The liberals say: Truth is the first casualty of war. But truth in the imperialist epoch can find refuge only in the camp of the international working class—the fight for socialism is the only road to world peace. We are not surprised by the barrage of lies of the Bush gang, eagerly retold by the rulers' "embedded" journalists—weapons of mass destruction (where are they when you need them!), Al Qaeda bases operating undetected in the U.S./British-imposed no-fly zone, the phony Jessica Lynch rescue.

The international working class, in its fight for socialism and the defense of truth, must defend Iraq against imperialist rape. The liberal and reformist socialists will tell you to march for peace, pray for peace, vote for peace. We revolutionary Marxists say, wage the class struggle at all levels, because the interests of the workers and the capitalists are irreconcilable. You want peace? Disarm the bourgeoisie! During the period of the antiwar marches we organized revolutionary internationalist contingents on these slogans: "For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack! Down with UN starvation blockade!" The American imperialists have their eye on the grand prize of Asia with China at its center. To the dismay of the liberal and reformist socialist antiwar leaders, our revolutionary internationalist contingents raised the slogans: "Defend North Korea's right to nuclear weapons! Defend China, Cuba and Vietnam!"

The provincial American imperialists have learned from the British, if not how to dress for power, at least how to wield it over their new Iraqi colonial slaves. Under the theme of "divide and rule" they reach deep into the social barrel to pull out remnants of the old ruling elite—the sheiks, the mullahs, shysters and hustlers of the old administration. They place them in prestigious positions with generous financial backing. Their underlings may be backward and feudal, brutal and corrupt; but for the imperialists these are cultural nuances that should not interfere with keeping the mass of colonial slaves

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South Africa...

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help of antiretroviral drugs, would be leading productive lives. Can there be more compelling proof of the ANC's anti-working-class and anti-poor policies? Every working-class fighter worthy of his salt knows that the break with the ANC is long overdue.

In justifying their treacherous connivance with the political agents of the white capitalist class, the COSATU/SACP misleaders perpetuate the lie that the ANC is a classless organisation—"contested terrain"—that can be pulled to either the side of the working class or the capitalists. The ex-Stalinist, right-wing social democrats of the SACP who dominate COSATU provide political justification for this treachery by their time-worn, Menshevik theory of two-stage revolution. For decades the SACP has sought to channel the heroic struggle of the masses into putting the bourgeois-nationalist ANC into power under the lying dogma of the "national democratic revolution." They tell the workers to join the ANC in order to make their voices heard. The COSATU misleaders use "summit this" or "summit that" talk shops with the capitalists and their government to divert class struggle. The COSATU bureaucracy are agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class, making groveling statements about how the "general strike was not against the government" and that they are not against privatisation per se—they just want to be consulted! Meanwhile, their capitalist ANC bosses are intolerant of even mild criticism from their SACP and COSATU junior partners, responding by labeling them "counterrevolutionists similar to the ultra-right-wingers" and "ultra-lefts," threatening to purge them.

The Fight Against All Wings of Pro-Capitalist Labour Bureaucracy

The task facing those opposed to the treacherous privileged labour bureaucracy is forging a revolutionary Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party to lead a socialist revolution against neo-apartheid capitalism. Only such a party can organise the fight to replace the labour lieutenants of capitalism within COSATU with revolutionary class-struggle leadership. ***The suspended office bearers of the CEPPWAWU Wits region are not a class-struggle leadership. In fact they manifest a different stripe of the bureaucratic response to pressure from the base.*** In 1998 John Appolis said that there is "no hope of the ANC changing and that the 'battle for the soul' of the ANC has been lost." Nonetheless, he urged COSATU to put forward a "workers platform" as a "list of demands...that were supposed to be delivered since 1994. It is an approach that says to the ANC 'if you want us to vote for you, abandon the Growth Employment and Redistribution Strategy and address the needs of the working class'" (*Sunday Independent*, 8 March 1998). This is a reformist programme of seeking to pressure the ANC, which represents the capitalist class. None of his actions has gone further than loyal opposition within the Alliance. He is, along with Trevor Ngwane, a prominent leader in the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF). In retaliation for its support to CEPPWAWU dissidents, the APF was recently evicted from COSATU House where it had been ensconced for many years.

The APF has drawn various disaffected elements behind Ngwane, an expelled ANC councilor, into struggle over basic services like electricity, housing and clean tap water. It includes pseudo-Trotskyist groupings like Keep Left! [associated with the Cliffite British Socialist Workers Party] and the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM) [affiliated with Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers' International], formerly known as the "Marxist Workers' Tendency (MWT) of the ANC." The APF's stock in trade has been to pressure the ANC government for structural adjustments within the framework of capitalism. During the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) and since the imperialist occupation of Iraq, the APF et al. have spouted socialist rhetoric.

Shopsteward

1995 COSATU conference. Program of SACP-dominated union bureaucracy, which chains black workers to capitalist ANC in name of "national democratic revolution," is counterposed to struggle for socialism.

During the recent imperialist war against Iraq there was a wave of ANC "national unity" mongering as they postured as opponents of the war. This was an attempt to regain credibility among an increasingly disaffected population. Meanwhile, the South African bourgeoisie pursues its appetites as a regional power in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), frequently in cahoots with the Western imperialists. The APF and the Anti-War Coalition bowed to this wave of "national unity" and made a pact with the ANC-led Tripartite Alliance against the war. This included sharing the speaker's platform during the February 15 demonstrations in Johannesburg's Library Gardens and a deal for joint protests outside the U.S. consulate in Killarney, also in Jozi. At the February 15 Johannesburg rally, Ngwane from the speaker's platform begged Mbeki to "break with capitalism" in order to take a stand against the United States and Britain! Of course, COSATU refused to mobilise its members in antiwar action and acted as a brake on class struggle at home.

The APF *is happy to dance and make deals with the ANC government while claiming to oppose the alliance in COSATU*. This conflicted posture toward the ANC characterises much of the APF swamp. Thus, in their article defending Wits regional CEPPWAWU, the DSM in *Izwi Labasebenzi* (Socialist Voice of Workers & Youth, June-August 2003) says, "The ANC's policies are consistent with its historic mission: to create a rich black capitalist class. This was always its aim even during the most radical days of the Freedom Charter." Still the MWT forebears of the DSM stayed in the ANC for 20 years! Elsewhere in the same issue the DSM says the "MWT ceased to exist in 1996, when it was decided that the ANC, especially with the adoption of Gear was now a conscious party of capitalism." This crystallised confusion only underscores their opportunism.

The dissident labour bureaucrats, no less than the COSATU tops, are reformist obstacles to the political struggle necessary to emancipate labour and all the oppressed from capitalist slavery. They provide a worthy service to the bourgeoisie by arresting left-moving elements of the working class, keeping them within the confines of shop-floor issues and other protests which do not threaten the ANC-administered neo-apartheid capitalist framework. The misnamed Workers International Vanguard League (WIVL) in a 20 May 2003 statement on the struggle "for workers' democracy in CEPPWAWU" purports to draw the lessons from the somewhat similar "dismissal of the 1386 VW strikers" in 2000 at the huge Uitenhage Volkswagen plant in the Eastern Cape. The VW strike, involving 4,000 workers, took on not only increased exploitation of the workforce, but also the pro-capitalist leadership of NUMSA dominated by the SACP. WIVL was a leading component of the Uitenhage Crisis Committee, which defended victimised strikers disciplined for participating in the strike. At the time, we defended the strikers while sharply opposing the committee's call for medi-

Class Struggle...

(continued from page 9)

subject and profits flowing. The imperialists promise everything to everybody, but keep the lion's share for themselves. Bremer's newly appointed Iraqi "governing council," as its first act of authority, declared April 9, the day the U.S. military took Baghdad and declared victory over Iraqi forces, a national holiday. At the same time they abolished the Iraqi national holiday that commemorated the 1958 revolution that overthrew the British-backed Iraqi monarchy. We may never know how much this holiday change cost the American imperialists, but it will be peanuts compared to the billions of dollars they intend to loot of the Iraqi national wealth.

The U.S. occupation authorities have already announced their intention to put future Iraqi oil revenue as collateral for bank loans to pay for reconstruction. This is the oil wealth that the Bush gang is "holding in trust" for the Iraqi people. Meanwhile every branch of Iraqi domestic industry is collapsing in the face of an economic assault coming on the heels of the imperialist military victory. The U.S. masters have given their Kurdish allies a franchise to smuggle stolen Iraqi industrial goods. The Iraqi beverage industry is shut down, as the country is flooded with Saudi and Syrian soft drinks. The textile industry faces the same with clothing from Asian sweatshops. The anti-union American poultry producer, Tyson, is dumping its product on the Iraqi market, shutting down the domestic industry. The only sector of the Iraqi workforce with money is the emerging government bureaucracy supported with American cash.

Trotsky remarked that the Americans are always going around the world "liberating" people. They "liberated" South America, Cuba and the Philippines from Spain. They "liberated" China from Japan. If the British had not negotiated their retreat on the world stage's center spot the Americans would have "liberated" India and the Middle East from them, too. Trotsky noted that the American rulers stand in the blood of the international working class and colonial slaves up to their elbows and present themselves to the world as "peacemakers." With two vast oceans to the east and west, weak neighbors to the north and south, an expanse of territory and abundant natural resources, the U.S. rulers had these guarantees against any encroachment from the powers of "old Europe." When they looked out upon the world they viewed it in its entirety as a colony and "old Europe" as junior partners. In Iraq this viewpoint can be seen in the words of an American soldier confronting Iraqi protesters, "We came here to give you your f---ing freedom. Back off!" The American and British occupation forces are facing 10 to 25 attacks a day in Iraq. No one is backing off. They recently requested 17,000 troops from Britain's old colony of India. The Indians said no thanks. Iraqi resistance is just, but only class struggle at home will break the chains of American imperialism. We revolutionaries will not back off!

The PDC has done invaluable work in support of class-war prisoners, such as the well-known black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal and lesser-known trade-union strikers defending their picket line. The LBL has supported PDC work over the years. The Spartacist League has provided the leadership. I urge you, the supporters, to dig deep into your pockets for financial contributions for the PDC. I urge you, the readers of *Workers Vanguard*, to support the party's main organizer with a subscription to *WV*. These are modest requests. We are modest people with a world to win!■

Just Out!

Contents include:

- Oakland Labor-Centered Mobilization Defies "National Unity"
  Defend Immigrants!
  Defend the Unions!
- Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq!
  U.S. Bloodbath in Baghdad
- South Chicago: Snapshots of Latino and Black Life
- Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!
- Nigeria: Woman Sentenced to Death by Stoning
- In Honor of Stephen Jay Gould
  Science and the Battle Against Racism and Obscurantism
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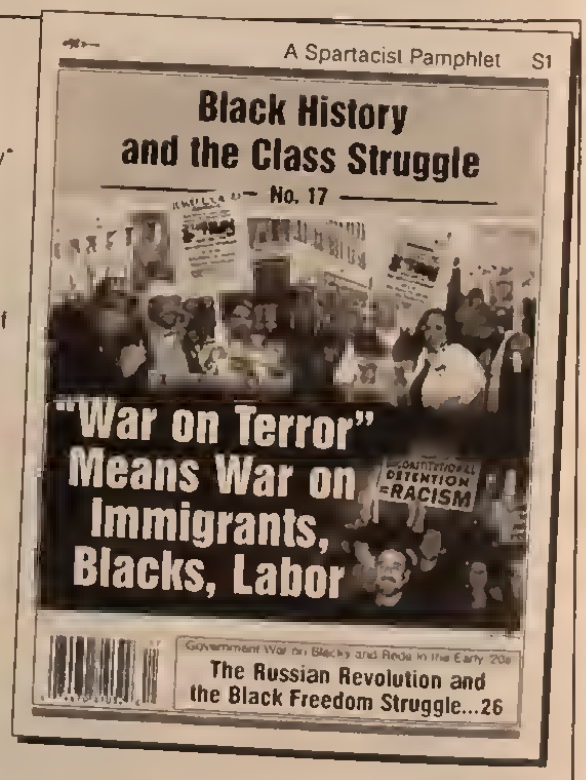

$1 (48 pages) *Black History* is sent to all *Workers Vanguard* subscribers

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ation and threats to sue the union (see "ANC Government Escalates War on South African Workers," *WV* No. 731, 10 March 2000). Calls for independent mediation are a code word for appeals to the bourgeois courts and strikebreaking arbitrators. And, in fact, lawyers representing the dismissed workers have sued NUMSA for several hundred million rands.

None of this is even mentioned in the WIVL rendition. The WIVL centrists have a track record of spitting on the fight for trade-union independence from the bourgeois state. Spartacist South Africa is opposed in principle to WIVL's act of class treason. Courts are not neutral but are bourgeois class instruments of oppression and coercion. This case exposes WIVL's fraudulent pretensions of breaking the unions from the ANC. The precondition for waging a struggle against the SACP's reformism and the bourgeois-nationalist ANC is the class independence of the proletariat from the bourgeois state. It is absurd to presume that one can fight the COSATU bureaucracy's subordination of the unions to the state by appealing to...the courts of the ANC government.

What COSATU tops and dissidents have in common with each other and many "leftists" is this willingness to bring the cops and courts into the labour movement. To make the bourgeois courts the arbiter is to create a union leadership that owes its positions to the capitalist government. The CEPPWAWU dissident bureaucracy has taken their union to the capitalist labour court, resulting in a reversal of the suspensions. For their part CEPPWAWU top bureaucrats called on the police to stop a shop stewards' protest march in mid-May. Moreover, they hired security guards for the Wits regional offices to ensure the suspended elected officials were denied access. These are examples of class treason. Cops and security guards are not workers, but armed thugs of the bourgeoisie to protect capitalist private property. Recently, when union dissidents went to a Gauteng regional COSATU shop stewards congress to protest their suspension, they were attacked and beaten by thugs from POPCRU, a cop "union." This is a warning against dangerous and suicidal illusions preached by the DSM. In *Izwi Labasebenzi* (June-August 2003) they uncritically comment that the Labour Court "ruled the suspensions unconstitutional and reinstated" the dissident officials. This is no accident given their reformist position on the bourgeois state exemplified by their historical support to POPCRU and their position that cops and security guards are workers in uniform. Cops/security guards out of the unions!

Past reactions to the treachery of the labour bureaucracy have been to form breakaway unions. This is where the

Reuters

Protesters in Durban demand affordable antiretroviral drugs. ANC government denies millions of HIV/AIDS patients access to such medication.

CEPPWAWU tops pushed the Wits region. Some number of dissident elements have only recently joined an independent union called the General Industrial Workers Union of South Africa (GIWUSA). The union tops are doubtlessly relieved to rid the union of critical-minded, advanced elements that are prepared to fight for the integrity of their own working-class organisations against the sellout misleaders in the pockets of the capitalist bloodsuckers.

Small economist breakaway unions are not an answer to such betrayals. Unions are working-class defence organisations. The practice of setting up breakaway unions undercuts the principle of industrial unionism. As we have written:

> "While the ANC/SACP-led Congress of South African Trade Unions is the principal organisation of black labour, another sizable trade-union grouping, the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU), is politically run in bloc by the PAC [Pan Africanist Congress] and AZAPO. The division of the labour movement into two union federations led by rival nationalist parties, as well as a number of independent unions led by leftists, weakens the workers in the day-to-day struggles with the employers and is potentially very dangerous. We stand for industrial unionism. All workers in a given industry should be in one union governed by the principles of internal democracy, with one worker, one vote."
>
> —Introduction to Spartacist pamphlet *The Fight for a Revolutionary Vanguard Party: Polemics on the South African Left* (April 1997)

Small breakaway unions are no less vulnerable to labour opportunists seeking to build their own bases of union dues they can control. One such group of opportunists is the union-suing WIVL, which itself led a breakaway. They recently conceded in the previously mentioned May 20 statement that their policy was mistaken. Unity in struggle against the bourgeoisie can be guaranteed when unions are consciously guided by class-struggle leadership, and they can only have such leadership when their best elements find the way into and are united in the Leninist-Trotskyist party of proletarian revolution.

Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Vanguard Party That Fights for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat!

Following the WSSD, unnamed members of the APF issued a statement by its "Socialist Group" that said: "It's time for us to think of forming a Mass Workers Party that will be controlled by the working class on a Socialist platform, a party where the Capitalists will not have a say." The idea of forming a mass workers party, centrally based on the COSATU unions or the social movements, in opposition to the ANC is not at all new. This is essentially a call for a "party of the whole class." The model for this is the (old) British Labour Party. We have raised the call for a Bolshevik workers party in South Africa in a way clearly and sharply counterposed to a pro-capitalist party such as the British Labour Party or the Brazilian Workers Party, which today is administering capitalism for the Brazilian ruling class. We reject the notion that the South African working class must pass through the experience of a mass reformist party before a revolutionary party can develop out of it—a kind of two-stage theory of party-building.

A Leninist party champions the rights of those facing special oppression from the bourgeois state like women, immigrants and other minorities. Moreover, the inherent task of such a party is to expose and break workers from reformist parties like the SACP, which need to be defeated politically. What conditions in South Africa cry out for is the forging of a revolutionary vanguard party that acts as a tribune of the people. The combative and powerful South African working class, if it is to struggle for its own liberation against capitalist exploitation, must lead the fight against brutal oppression of women, immigrants, the rural poor and the millions who languish in the country's destitute shantytowns. This is the only way to unite all the oppressed against their common enemy, ANC-led neo-apartheid capitalism.

The fundamental point is that the many-sided conditions of exploitation, oppression and backwardness cannot be significantly lessened simply through trade-union struggle. It manifestly requires a proletarian revolution such as Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks led in Russia in 1917. In South Africa that means the application of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution: the expropriation of the white-owned mines, factories and farms and the establishment of a planned, socialist economy where those who produce the wealth of society rule. Genuine national emancipation and basic democratic rights like one man, one vote—without veto powers by the white racist minority—economic and land redistribution can only be achieved through the overthrow of capitalism. For socialist revolution in southern Africa to survive, it must be internationally extended to the imperialist centres in Europe, the U.S. and Japan. Spartacist South Africa, a section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), is committed to forging a proletarian, internationalist party to lead new October Revolutions worldwide. Join us!■

Nadine Hutton

Under neo-apartheid ANC capitalist rule, unemployment has nearly doubled over the last eight years.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

South Africa: Union Militants Protest COSATU Alliance with ANC

No to Court Suits Against the Union! Break with ANC-Led Bourgeois Nationalism!

The following article was submitted by our comrades of Spartacist South Africa.

JOHANNESBURG—Tensions in the governing African National Congress-led (ANC) Tripartite Alliance are heating up again in the lead-up to the 2004 national elections. Since early May, the Wits region of the Chemical, Energy, Paper, Print, Wood and Allied Workers Union (CEPPWAWU) has battled heavy-handed bureaucratic persecution by their national leadership and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) head office. The "crime" of the dissident unionists was to question COSATU's alliance with the ANC and the other alliance junior partner, the South African Communist Party (SACP). Four regional office bearers, John Appolis, Dan Nkotsoe, Vuyani Tayika and Nomhoniso Ndlwana, were suspended for supporting their membership's call for a referendum on the continued alliance and support to the ANC in the 2004 national elections. Also, the Wits region's delegates to the National Executive Committee were underhandedly suspended.

Cape Town, 1 October 2002: Mass union rally at start of two-day nationwide general strike against privatizations.

AP

These union developments in Gauteng Province, the economic and industrial engine of Africa, come on the eve of the COSATU national congress in September. Spartacist South Africa is opposed to the political witchhunting and suppression meted out by the CEPPWAWU national leadership. We stand for workers democracy and defend workers who don't want to be rubberstamps for the pro-ANC policies of the COSATU tops. However, the union dissidents have taken the union to the Labour Court to reverse their suspensions. This runs counter to the necessity of the unions to be independent of the bourgeois state if they are to be instruments of struggle in defence of the working class against capitalist attacks.

The background to the call for a referendum is the two-day October 2002 COSATU general strike against the ANC government's privatisation. A subsequent assessment by the suspended Wits region issued on 17 May 2003 noted, "Before the elections we fight battles with the ANC government. But when the national elections approach we are turned into the election machinery of the ANC." They went on to indicate the "workers told us that COSATU cannot fight privatisation decisively because of the Alliance with the ANC/SACP."

COSATU *should* break its ties with the Tripartite Alliance, and to the extent the workers see the necessity of breaking with the ANC, that is the beginning of wisdom—but only the beginning. Within COSATU, there are a lot of workers fed up with the ANC government. Following the two-week national strike against South African steel giant Iscor, a top National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) official at the Vanderbijlpark plant was suspended for not acquiescing to the national leadership colluding with the bosses. In April, 18,000 members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in Rustenberg tossed out their misleaders, electing a strike committee to fight the company threat to their provident (retirement) funds, thereby bringing the country's largest platinum producer to its knees.

Trade-union militancy alone is not enough. Who can forget the heroic struggles of the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) against this government, from the national strike in 2002, which saw the Minister of Defence call the army out against the union in Durban, to the recent five-week bus strike that brought bus transportation in Johannesburg to a halt? In fact, general strike actions are forced on the COSATU/SACP bureaucrats by pressure from the base and are called as steam-blowing exercises. Privatisation can only be fought effectively and decisively as part of the struggle to overthrow the whole capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. This requires a fight to oust the pro-capitalist leadership within the labour movement and to replace it with class-struggle leaders, i.e., leaders who understand that battles are won or lost at the point of production.

The fact of 50 percent unemployment among Africans may seem to counteract the central role of the working class, but the truth is quite the opposite. It is important to link up the most desperately impoverished sections of the black populace, those without jobs, to the power of the proletariat. Only the working class has the social weight and strategic relationship to the means of production to become gravediggers of capitalism. Led by a revolutionary vanguard party, the proletariat must fight at the head of all the oppressed—from the unemployed youth in the townships, to those demanding decent housing, to AIDS sufferers seeking quality health care and antiretroviral treatment. This is the way forward to socialism.

The Brutal Face of Neo-Apartheid Capitalism

The "new" South Africa continues the exploitation of the old white-supremacist regime. The ANC is a capitalist party, an enemy of the workers and poor. Despite promises to the contrary, the nonwhite majority is poorer than before 1994 and the white minority is richer than before. The ANC government is just as ruthless in defending the so-called right to private property as its apartheid white National Party predecessors. The brutal killing of mine workers immediately after last year's general strike at the ERPM mine is a case in point (see *Spartacist South Africa* No. 3, "Striking Miners Killed in the Service of 'Black Empowerment' Elite," Summer/Autumn 2003). No amount of lies can hide the living reality that the ANC's agenda is to build a black, privileged elite as part of the still-dominant white capitalist class.

According to a survey by Statistics South Africa, "The income of the average black household fell by 19 percent between 1995 and 2000 while that of the average white household increased by 15 percent." In hard cash, the survey revealed that "in October 1995, the average annual household income among African-headed households was R23000. When this figure is raised to 2000 market prices, the figure becomes R32000. In 2000, however, the actual average annual household income was R26000." The average annual household income for 1995 for whites was R103,000 and when adjusted for 2000 market prices it is R137,000. As the *Sowetan* (18 November 2002) reported, in 2000 the average annual income was R158,000.

A *Sowetan* (10 December 2002) article reported that "South Africans have been pretending that the food problem only haunts the other countries in the Southern African Development Community, yet it does affect South Africa. All eyes were on Zimbabwe and Zambia, while in their own backyard, in Eastern Cape, South Africans were dying of hunger." A 3 September 2002 article of the same newspaper, headlined "1 in 10 of Our People Are Hungry," reported findings by a market research and management company. Before then, a *Sunday Times* front-page article (28 July 2002) headlined, "Dread Diseases Hit SA's Starving Kids," and reported that "Three-quarters of all South Africans do not have enough food." This is a horrifying picture of the "new" South Africa..

Privileges associated with the "gravy train" self-enrichment and corruption among top leaders of the ANC are becoming a daily feature; it is the working people who must pay with their blood for capitalism and its excesses. Meanwhile this government is perpetuating genocide against the poor by denying HIV/AIDS patients access to antiretroviral drugs. Between six hundred and one thousand people are dying daily because of AIDS-related sicknesses—people that, with the

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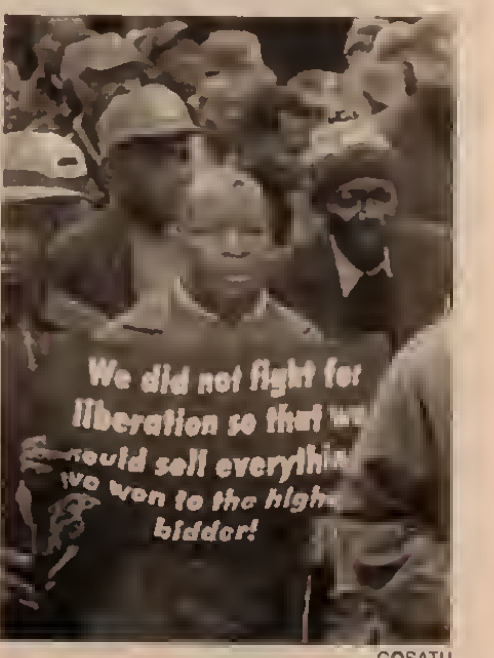

COSATU

Protester during 2001 COSATU general strike. ANC nationalists front for white capitalist exploiters.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 809 12 September 2003

Defend North Korea's Right to Nuclear Weapons!

U.S. Hands Off North Korea!

Reuters

U.S. soldier patrols "demilitarized zone," marking imperialist Cold War partition of Korea. U.S. occupation force in South Korea poses mortal threat to North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states.

In recent weeks, the U.S. imperialists have been escalating their threats and provocations against North Korea. The "multilateral" talks recently held in Beijing are nothing but a diplomatic front for disarming North Korea. North Korean vessels have already been interdicted and sequestered on the high seas over the past year by Japan, Spain, Australia and Taiwan. Later this month, the U.S. will lead joint naval exercises in the Coral Sea as the first coordinated action of a "Proliferation Security Initiative" that threatens a full-scale naval blockade of North Korea, which would be an *act of war.*

The Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League, stands for the ***unconditional military defense of North Korea*** against imperialism, including its right to develop and possess nuclear weapons—the more the better.

Just over 50 years ago, in July of 1953, the U.S. signed the truce with North Korea that froze the division of the peninsula into two societies that differed in fundamental ways. After a particularly vicious, 40-year-long Japanese colonial occupation fronted by Korean collaborators, gigantic social upheavals swept the Korean peninsula following World War II. In the North, where the uprisings were abetted by the presence of the armed forces of the USSR, industry was expropriated and the land-owning *rentiers* who dominated the peasantry were smashed as a class. In the absence of the working class contending for power under the leadership of a revolutionary Trotskyist party, the insurgent masses came to be led by the peasant-guerrilla forces of Kim Il Sung, who had fought against the Japanese during the war and contributed tens of thousands of fighters to aid Mao Zedong's People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the Chinese Revolution that triumphed in 1949.

In 1950, the U.S., which already had troops in the south of the peninsula, launched a war under the aegis of the United Nations against Kim Il Sung's Northern army after it had entered the South in conjunction with the social uprisings there, intending to reunify the country. During the 1950-53 Korean War, the American imperialists slaughtered some three and a half million Koreans, charring the country with oceans of napalm and reducing the peninsula to rubble.

After the armistice—a peace treaty has never been signed—the South was ruled by the former capitalist collaborators with the Japanese occupation under a series of outright dictatorships that extended into the 1980s. These regimes were propped up by tens of thousands of U.S. troops, a presence that remains in place to this day. These troops have been repeatedly used to back up the suppression of working-class militancy and social uprisings in the South and are a signal of U.S. imperialism's intent to reverse its defeat in the North. ***All U.S. troops and bases out of South Korea!***

From 1950 until now, North Korea has faced unremitting hostile intentions and actions by U.S. imperialism, in part because its very existence is a reminder of Washington's military failure in its drive to "roll back communism," i.e., to achieve the historic "mission" of overthrowing the gains of the October Revolution in Russia. Those gains, although deformed by bureaucratic caste rule, had spread throughout Soviet-occupied areas of East Europe after World War II; and in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam and Cuba, peasant-based social revolutions led to the creation of deformed workers states. The Korean peninsula has always been seen by the U.S. as a highway on which to launch a military attack to overthrow the 1949 Chinese Revolution, as witnessed by General Douglas MacArthur's oft-expressed wish during the Korean War to attack Chinese Manchuria.

Our unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state, ruled through primogeniture by Kim Il Sung's son, Kim Jong Il, at the head of the Stalinist bureaucracy, is, at base, a defense of the overturn and expropriation of capitalism. As part of the defense of these historic gains, we fight for workers political revolution to overthrow the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies whose opposition to international socialist revolution and futile attempts to appease imperialism undermine the gains of these revolutions. To abandon defense of the workers states is to abandon the historic purpose of proletarian revolution. That purpose and, thus, the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states in China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea form the cornerstone of the program of the ICL, as they must for any who stand for world socialist revolution.

It is to be noted that several pseudo-socialist organizations, in this country most prominently the International Socialist Organization, base their origins on a refusal to defend North Korea and China against U.S. imperialism during the Korean War—i.e., these groups are, in their origins, based on a betrayal of proletarian revolution. In contrast, our forebears of the then-Trotskyist U.S. Socialist Workers Party forthrightly called for the defense of North Korea and China against their "own" ruling class during the Korean War.

Bush and Democrats on Warpath

To justify its threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the U.S. has invoked Pyongyang's stated intent to develop, produce and, most recently, test nuclear weapons. This justification is a smoke screen. From the git-go, North Korea was included by Bush as a main component of the "axis of evil" supposedly threatening the planet, while North Korea, China and Cuba are among the seven countries targeted for a potential nuclear first strike as outlined in the Pentagon's "Nuclear Posture Review."

The Bush administration's drive against North Korea is a continuation of the Cold War policies instituted by Democratic president Harry Truman, whose administration considered nuking the North during the Korean War. That consideration was set aside in recognition of the capacity of the Soviet Union to respond in kind. With the destruction of the USSR, Bush is quite capable of revisiting that decision. It is notable that almost every current aspiring Democratic presidential candidate has accused Bush of neglecting the "North Korea threat." In February, liberal California Congresswoman Barbara Lee, a darling of reformist antiwar leftists like Workers World Party, demanded of Secretary of State Colin Powell: "What will it take for the Administration to focus as much attention on North Korea, which has demonstrated its nuclear and missile capabilities, as it is focusing on Iraq?"

In fact, Bush has been no slacker. As frankly stated by John R. Bolton, U.S. undersecretary of state for arms

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Twelve Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

See Page 4

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Showdown in L.A. Transit

For a Solid Strike!

SEPTEMBER 7—Los Angeles transit workers have been working without a new contract after refusing to cave in to demands from a hardlining Metropolitan Transportation Agency (MTA) hent on major takeaways. The contract for Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1277, which represents the mechanics and maintenance workers, expired last September. The contracts for the United Transportation Union (UTU), which represents bus and train drivers, and the Transportation Communication International Union (TCIU), which represents clerks, expired at the end of June.

While details of negotiations are largely being kept from union members, the MTA is reportedly demanding that union members cough up suhstantially more to pay for health care while getting a nominal 1 percent pay raise. The MTA also seeks takeaways from drivers and mechanics in rules governing discipline, work and overtime. Over the last year, the ATU health care fund has been dwindling as the MTA has limited its contrihutions, while health care eosts have skyrocketed.

At their last mass meeting in January, the ATU mechanics voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike, as did the UTU bus drivers in June. Now, with a 60-day "cooling off" period imposed during the summer coming to an end for the UTU on Septemher 18 and for the ATU on October 12, the question of a strike is posed point blank. While the union tops do everything possible to demobilize the membership, many workers understand that a strike will he necessary given the intransigence of the MTA. As one worker told a *WV* salesman, "We know it will take a strike, so let's do it!" Damned right! Transit workers should he demanding a mass meeting of all three unions to hammer out a joint strategy and organize joint strike action.

L.A. transit workers have struck seven times in the last 31 years. The current showdown takes place three years after the 32-day strike of UTU bus drivers in 2000 which heat back a union-busting assault hy the MTA through the flexing of union power on the picket lines. That strike eame amid a wave of labor struggles in L.A. and was widely popular among the black and Latino poor who rely on puhlic transport. Alarmed by the display of union militancy, County Federation of Lahor chief Miguel Contreras and other lahor misleaders rushed in Democrat Jesse Jackson to put out the fire and negotiate a "compromise" deal involving significant union concessions, including increasing the numher of part-time drivers and the number of "tiers" which divide the workforce.

We wrote at the time, "Here is an ohject lesson in how the lahor bureaucracy's allegiance to the Democratic Party chains the unions to the capitalist class enemy and is *counterposed* to militant class struggle" ("Jesse Jackson, L.A. Democrats Defuse Militant Strike: L.A. Transit Workers Face Down Union-Busters," *WV* No. 744, 20 Octoher 2000). First, the union tops postponed the strike for months, on orders of Democratic governor Gray Davis, to avoid disrupting the Democratic National Convention held that year in L.A. With the presidential election looming, the AFL-CIO tops who had heen mobilizing to get out the vote for Al Gore feared an upsurge of lahor struggle in this key state for the Democrats. Finally, Jackson was brought in to preach "reconciliation" with management and urge an end to the strike.

Through their longstanding marriage to the Democratic Party, the lahor bureaucracy demonstrates that it shares the outlook of the capitalist rulers and is committed to the defense of their profit system. The union tops see in the capitalist state an ally or neutral arbiter where in fact it is nothing other—with its cops and courts—than the organized machine of the employers to suppress the working class.

Today, as another strike looms, the union tops are pushing the same legalistic, class-collaborationist policies in an effort to renounce victory hefore the hattle is even engaged. For years, union contracts at the MTA expired at the same time, hut in 2000 the ATU leadership broke ranks and negotiated a shorter contract, allowing the bosses to divide and weaken the workers. Now, faced with an intransigent MTA management looking to play hardhall, the pro-capitalist UTU and ATU leaderships pleaded with Davis to obtain a court order imposing a 60-day "cooling off" period, justifying this to the memhership as a way of preventing the MTA from using idle school buses in the summer to hreak a strike. The union hureaucrats were so desperate to give up the strike weapon to the strike-breaking capitalist government that they in effect asked Davis to prevent their membership from walking out. For the unions to he instruments of struggle in defense of the working class, they must be independent of the bourgeois state.

Not satisfied with getting the capitalist state to say when the union can strike, ATU president Neil Silver ohsequiously requested the hosses' courts to rule on whether mechanics can honor the drivers' picket lines if the UTU goes on strike after Septemher 18 while the ATU is still "cooling off"! This is despite the fact that the previous contract contains a provision protecting ATU memhers who refuse to cross a picket line. On Septemher 3, the judge refused to rule on this matter, wanting to wait until the unions try to act in their own defense. Honoring picket lines is a principle that must be ***asserted*** hy labor through action and not made conditional on approval by the capitalist masters against whom it is directed. Strikes and picket lines are the way lahor defends its interests. Lahor rights were not willingly granted to the working class hy the bosses and their capitalist state, hut were ***wrested*** from the labor-hating U.S. ruling class through hard-fought, often hloody, class struggle. But the bureaucrats want to play by the bosses' rules, which is a recipe for defeat.

In 2000, when Davis signed a law demanded by the union tops that any new "regional transit zones" be covered by existing contract provisions for four years, Silver immediately howed to Davis and ordered mechanics to start crossing the bus drivers' picket lines! Flouting a 30-year history of transit unions honoring each other's strike lines, Silver declared, "If there is a picket line, it shall be crossed." Silver reversed his order less than 24 hours later as almost to a man his memhership defied him and refused to cross the piekets! The heroic stand by the mechanics and the determination of the other unions forced the MTA to pull back from its harshest demands.

This time around, in addition to putting the ATU membership's fate in the

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TROTSKY

LENIN

For the Political Independence of the Working Class!

The bloody suppression of the revolutionary Chilean working class 30 years ago by Pinochet's military coup underscores that class collaboration is the primary obstacle to workers power, politically subordinating the interests of the proletariat to those of the bourgeoisie. Writing in 1936, at the time of the Spanish Civil War, Leon Trotsky warned that the People's Front government would strangle the Spanish workers revolution, as it did, leading to the victory of Franco's reactionary forces in 1939.

Incapahle of solving a single one of the tasks posed by the revolution, since all these tasks boil down to one, namely, the crushing of the bourgeoisie, the Popular Front renders the existence of the bourgeois regime impossible and therehy provokes the fascist coup d'etat. By lulling the workers and peasants with parliamentary illusions, by paralyzing their will to struggle, the Popular Front creates the favorable conditions for the victory of fascism. The policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie must be paid for hy the proletariat with years of new torments and sacrifice, if not by decades of fascist terror....

The conquest of power by the proletariat is possible only on the road of armed insurrection against the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie. The smashing of this apparatus and its replacement by workers', soldiers', and peasants' councils is the necessary condition for the fulfillment of the socialist program.

—Leon Trotsky, "The Popular Front in Civil War" (July 1936), printed in *The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)* (Pathfinder Press, 1982)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The closing date for news in this issue is 9 September

No. 809 **12 September 2003**

Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste

Canadian Troops Out of Afghanistan!

Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq!

TORONTO

Saturday, Sept. 20, 3 p.m.
Room 8200, OISE
252 Bloor St. W.
(above St. George Station)
For more information: (416) 593-4138
e-mail: spartean@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Friday, Oct. 3, 7 p.m.
Britannia Community Centre
1661 Napier St.
(off Commercial Drive)
For more information: (604) 687-0353
e-mail: tllt@look.ca

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Thirtieth Anniversary of Pinochet Coup in Chile

Popular Front Means Workers' Blood

Thirty years later, the 11 September 1973 military coup that overthrew the Chilean Unidad Popular (UP—Popular Unity) coalition government of Salvador Allende remains a lesson in betrayal, written in the blood of the 30,000 workers, peasants and leftists killed in its aftermath by the murderous junta of General Augusto Pinochet. Untold thousands more were thrown into concentration camps, where many were horribly tortured. Up to 100,000 were forced into exile, where they continued to be hounded and assassinated by Pinochet's DINA secret police in league with the forces of the Argentine junta and others under the aegis of the CIA's Operation Condor terror campaign.

The Allende regime and the Pinochet coup were defining political events for a generation of leftists around the world. The UP was a classic "popular front"—a coalition subordinating the Chilean workers to their deadly class enemies through a bloc with a mythical "progressive" section of the capitalist rulers. Historically, the purpose of the popular front has always been to head off the threat of workers revolution, as in the Spanish Civil War, disarming the working class and buying the capitalists time to behead the proletariat. Contrary to the many articles, books and films that idolize Allende as simply a martyred victim of the CIA and the Chilean generals, Allende and his fellow reformists led the Chilean working class directly into this historic, crushing defeat.

This is not hindsight. The Spartacist League, drawing on the experience of the Russian Revolution and of Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky's analysis of the Spanish and French Popular Front governments of the 1930s, declared in 1970:

> "It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready."
>
> —"Chilean Popular Front," *Spartacist* No. 19, November-December 1970

Virtually every other political tendency on the left called in one way or another for political support to the UP.

In the late 1960s, there was an immense upsurge in class struggle in Chile: landless peasants were increasingly occupying the vast landed estates while the number of workers strikes—particularly by the powerful copper miners, steel workers and railway employees—skyrocketed. The historic parties of the Chilean working class, the Communist Party and Allende's Socialist Party, united with the bourgeois Radicals and some minor capitalist parties to form the UP, which won a plurality in the 1970 elections with its program of a nationalist and parliamentary "Chilean road to socialism." This alarmed the Chilean capitalists and their U.S. imperialist patrons, who demanded and received from Allende a "Statute of Constitutional Guarantees" vowing not to touch the military officer corps and to outlaw workers militias. In his "First Message to Congress," Allende proclaimed:

> "The Chilean Armed Forces and the Carabineros, faithful to their duty and to their tradition of non-intervention in the political process, will support a social organization which corresponds to the will of the people."

Under the UP government, society increasingly polarized between the working class and the capitalists. Both the "far left" MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Movement of the Revolutionary Left) and fascist groups like Patria y Libertad mushroomed. The country was in a prerevolutionary situation: in the industrial centers embryonic expressions of dual power—i.e., potential organs of workers rule—sprung up, like the *cordones industriales* (workers committees). Vainly trying to appease the capitalists, the UP government suppressed peasant land seizures, sent riot cops against strikes and prevented the workers from arming themselves. But the UP's inability to resolve the deepening social crisis only further infuriated the bourgeoisie. The CIA launched a massive "destabilization" campaign as then U.S. president Richard Nixon vowed to "make the [Chilean] economy scream."

Raising the alarm with increasing urgency, we declared in 1972: "As the forces of repression gear themselves for the confrontation and the petty-bourgeoisie slides into the camp of reaction, the working class stands naked, without the organs of dual power, without arms, without a vanguard" ("Pop Front Imperils Chilean Workers," *WV* No. 14, December 1972). As the putschists actively plotted to overthrow him, Allende appointed General Pinochet, one of the foremost "constitutionalist" officers, as head of the army and brought him into the government. Only weeks later, Pinochet led the reactionary coup, annihilating the organized workers movement.

We fought urgently to break the Chilean workers from this death trap. In an SL/U.S. leaflet issued on 4 September 1973, a week before the coup, we declared:

> "The government of the Unidad Popular is not a workers government. It is a coalition of workers and capitalist parties. The presence of the 'radical' bourgeoisie and the 'democratic' generals is a guarantee that the Allende government will not step beyond the bounds of capitalism.... Rather than pressuring Allende...we must instead call on the workers to break sharply with the bourgeois popular front and the government parties, to fight for a workers and peasants government based on a revolutionary program of expropriation of the agrarian and industrial bourgeoisie."

In a special *Workers Vanguard* supplement (13 September 1973) published two days after the coup, we declared: "It is the duty of all U.S. working-class organizations, both trade unions and parties, to launch an immediate, united-front protest against the counterrevolutionary coup. Smash the reactionary junta—For workers revolution in Chile!" The SL initiated protests and fought for and participated in international labor solidarity actions in defense of the Chilean proletariat.

The centrist organizations of the "far left"—including the pro-Castro, guerrillaist MIR and many (like Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat) who claimed the heritage of Leon Trotsky's Fourth International—gave the UP treachery a left cover with their "critical" political support to it. They share responsibility for delivering the workers to Pinochet's butchers. Castro himself, representing the Stalinist bureaucracy of the Cuban deformed workers state, embraced Allende's UP government and even invited "constitutionalist" army officers, including Pinochet, to visit Cuba—betraying not only the Chilean workers but the Cuban Revolution, which was desperately in need of international extension to break out of its isolation.

In Chile, the "peaceful road to socialism" was put to a decisive test. The catastrophe brutally demonstrated—in the

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WV Photo

1976 NYC protest on third anniversary of Pinochet coup. Spartacists warned that popular front would pave way for bloody defeat, called to mobilize proletariat to smash military junta.

Spartacist/SYC Forums

Near East: Women's Liberation and the Fight for Socialist Revolution

All U.S./British Troops Out of Iraq Now!

Saturday, Sept. 13, 3 p.m.
Boston University
George Sherman Union—Rm. 315
775 Commonwealth Avenue

For more information: (617) 666-9453
e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

BOSTON

Twelve Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

Saturday, Sept. 13, 4 p.m.
Circle Center, Room 713
750 S. Halsted Street, UIC

For more information: (312) 563-0441
e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

CHICAGO

Lessons of the Antiwar Movement

Imperialist Occupation of Iraq: U.S. Troops Out Now!

Saturday, Sept. 13, 3 p.m.
Centro del Pueblo, 474 Valencia St.
San Francisco (16th/Mission BART)

For more information: (510) 839-0851
e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

BAY AREA

Defend the Gains of the Cuban Revolution!

U.S. Imperialism Hands Off!

Thursday, Sept. 25, 7 p.m.
322 West 48 St., 1st Floor
(Take E or C train to 50th St. stop,
Between 8th and 9th Avenues)

For more information: (212) 267-1025
e-mail: nyspl@compuserve.com

NEW YORK CITY

Twelve Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

We print below an edited and expanded version of a presentation by comrade Victor Gibbons at a public Spartacist educational in New York City on April 27. In particular we have added a more extensive account of the intervention of the International Communist League in the USSR in the early 1990s, which was taken

PART ONE

from a later presentation by comrade Gibbons in London on July 12. As a member of the ICL's Moscow Station at the time, the speaker was centrally involved in the struggle to carry out the Trotskyist program in the Soviet Union at that crucial moment in world history.

Millions around the world burn with rage at the sight of Iraq reduced to rubble and humiliated by old-style colonial pillage. The images of U.S. troops trampling with their jackboots over a country which American imperialism first starved, then bombed and bled white in a display of global dominance by the "world's only superpower" are truly obscene. This just outrage must be raised to a political understanding that the enslavement of Iraq is yet another price that the international working class and the oppressed peoples of the Third World are paying for the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. Today's imperialist global rampage was impossible when the USSR still existed.

It is especially important to understand this because among the main organizers of the current antiwar protests are reformist "socialists" who today proclaim themselves antiwar and "anti-imperialist" but who yesterday joined with the American and West European imperialists in cheering the demise of the USSR. We Trotskyists of the International Communist League fought to the end in defense of the Soviet workers state and the collectivized economy ushered in by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. This defense was despite and against the Stalinist misrule that had undermined the foundations of the workers state for six decades and had opened the door to counterrevolution. Uniquely, the ICL intervened in the Soviet Union beginning in the late 1980s seeking to mobilize the working class against the powerful forces, backed by world (centrally American) imperialism, driving toward capitalist restoration. This was part of our struggle for new October Revolutions around the world.

Spartacist

Above: International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) banner raised in Moscow at 1991 demonstration on anniversary of October Revolution. Right: Historic ICL leaflet was mass-distributed in USSR following August 1991 Yeltsin coup, calling to defend gains of October.

Just as we Trotskyists had always warned would happen, the demise of the USSR decisively altered the political landscape on this planet in many ways. Despite the Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration, the Soviet Union represented the industrial and military powerhouse protecting every other country that had overthrown capitalist rule, from China to Vietnam to Cuba. It was only fear of possible Soviet retaliation that held American imperialism back from using nuclear weapons against North Korea and China in the Korean War of the early 1950s and against North Vietnam in the 1960s.

While the U.S. rulers are now grabbing more of the oil wealth of the Near East, their main and ultimate target is the People's Republic of China, by far the largest and strongest of those remaining states where capitalism has been overthrown. China is confronting mounting American military pressure, from the expansion of U.S. bases in the Philippines to new U.S. bases across Central Asia. China (and North Korea) are among those states explicitly indicated as potential targets for a U.S. nuclear first strike as laid out in the Pentagon's 2002 "Nuclear Posture Review." This makes all the more clear our duty to fight for the unconditional military defense of China and North Korea, bureaucratically deformed workers states, against the imperialist powers. And that means defending the right of North Korea to develop nuclear weapons. As we did in the former USSR and the East European deformed workers states, we also call for proletarian political revolutions to get rid of the ruling nationalist bureaucracies—whose policies undermine and weaken those states—and install governments based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Another result of the Soviet Union's demise is that the nominally independent countries of the Third World can no longer maneuver between the "two superpowers." They thus face the unrestrained economic exactions and brute military force of the imperialists. Look at the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, where the overturn of the October Revolution has led to the intensification of imperialist bloodsucking, and with it, the increased starvation and bloodshed—ethnic group against ethnic group, country against country, everybody out for some advantage in a battle for survival. This has occurred because the International Monetary Fund and World Bank have demanded repayment of the money they had given previously as a sop to these African countries during the Cold War against the Soviet Union.

Finally, the destruction of the USSR has inflamed the rivalries between the imperialist states of North America, West Europe and Japan whose conflicts of interest are no longer restrained by their capitalist rulers' shared commitment to the former anti-Soviet alliance. These rivalries spur the rulers' efforts to achieve greater economic competitiveness in the world market by intensifying the rate of exploitation of labor in their own countries. Thus the bourgeoisie has been trashing what is left of the "welfare state" in West Europe and the far more meager social programs in the United States.

The Trotskyist movement had long predicted that a counterrevolution in Soviet Russia would enormously strengthen the forces of capitalist reaction on a global scale. For example, in 1929, a founding document of the International Left Opposition in the U.S. forewarned:

> "The collapse of the Russian revolution as the dictatorship of the proletariat would signify the retardation for decades of the revolutionary movement in Europe and America and the uprisings of the colonial peoples, whose main point of support today is the victory of the Russian October. A collapse would be followed by an unequaled reign of reaction throughout the world and would entail a restoration of world imperialist rule without precedent in the last two or three decades."
>
> —"Platform of the Communist Opposition" (February 1929); reprinted in *James P. Cannon Writings and Speeches, 1928-31: The Left Opposition in the U.S. 1928-31* (Monad Press [1981])

Social Catastrophe of Post-Soviet Russia

The greatest devastation brought about by the fall of the USSR has taken place on its own former territory. The face of the "new Russia" can be seen not only in the economic catastrophe that has befallen the population but in the degradation of women and national minorities and in the slaughter and destruction inflicted by Russian occupation forces in Chechnya. A central goal of the counterrevolutionary regime of Boris Yeltsin was to destroy the collectivized economy inherited from the former Soviet Union. Against all complaints over incompetence or corruption, Yeltsin's stock answer was to point out he had achieved the main thing he'd promised: no more communism in Russia.

And in place of what it destroyed, what has capitalism built in these 12 years? Just as Soviet progress could be measured in the figures of concrete, steel and education, so now can capitalism's return be measured in figures of ruin, disease and barbarism. In these 12 years capitalism's profit system reveals itself as a deadly enemy of humanity—a machine not for the advancement of the international productive forces and culture but for their destruction.

Capitalism has passed a death sentence on the Russian population: in absolute numbers deaths exceeded births during the first six years after the capitalist counterrevolution by 3.5 million; by 2001 this figure had become 6.75 million; and by now even conservative estimates of the population contraction are closer to 8 million! In 1989, average male life expectancy was 64.2 years. In Yeltsin's Russia of 1994, it dropped to 57.6 years. This historically unprecedented sudden drop in life expectancy equals, for the nine-year period from 1987 to 1996, the ghosts of 11 million stolen lifetimes. A 16-year-old boy has less of a chance to survive to 60 in Putin's Russia than in the benighted filth of 19th-century tsarism! The population of the Russian Federation, now smaller

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than Pakistan's, has seen its greatest reversal in a 1,000-year expansion from the country's origins in medieval Kievan Rus.

The death rate is not centered on the very young or old, as is typical of impoverished societies, but rather on men in their prime. In 2002, the State Statistical Committee predicted as its "most probable forecast" that the population of the Russian Federation would fall from 144 million to 101 million by 2050. In a worst-case scenario, the population would fall to 77 million, a reduction of almost 50 percent! This holocaust is looming not over a marginal hinterland, but the nuclear-armed colossus of Eurasia.

What is behind this catastrophe? The economic collapse of post-Soviet Russia was unprecedented for a modern society: gross domestic product fell by over 80 percent from 1991 to 1997; according to official (understated) statistics, capital investment dropped over 90 percent. By the middle of the decade, 40 percent of the population of the Russian Federation was living below the official poverty line and a further 36 percent only a little above it. Millions were literally starving.

This massive economic and social immiseration has combined with the destruction of the public health system. Tuberculosis (TB), which had been effectively eradicated in the Soviet Union, has returned as a scourge of Russia's poor. Recent estimates put the number of Russians with TB at 88 per 100,000, compared to a rate of 4 to 10 per 100,000 in West Europe and America. The number of those infected with HIV/AIDS is increasing faster in Russia and Ukraine than anywhere else in the world.

Capitalism has wiped out a century of social progress, and what a century! What is being destroyed in Russia today is everything that Soviet workers and rural toilers had built, everything that their parents and grandparents before them had constructed with such sacrifice and heroism in the face of the Civil War and imperialist interventions of 1918-21, the murderous excesses of agricultural collectivization and forced-march industrialization, the invasion by Nazi Germany in the Second World War, the horrors of Stalin's terror which reached into every family. All of this had been endured in the bitter resolve that it would someday, somehow lead to a better, socialist society. Now the proletariat's very will to live is being torn away, as everything they had built over the generations is smashed to pieces and looted as the officially sanctioned and celebrated private property of vulgar capitalist gangsters—who in many cases are the very same Communist Party leaders and apparatchiks who had so long been falsely identified with "socialism."

Red October 1917

To understand the social catastrophe that has befallen post-Soviet Russia and to save the banner of socialism, it is necessary to understand the origins of the Soviet Union in the October 1917 Revolution, led by the Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky, and its subsequent bureaucratic degeneration under J.V. Stalin and his heirs.

The October Revolution arose out of the imperialist slaughter of the First World War. It was the signal act of the 20th century, which Lenin described as the epoch of imperialist decay and socialist revolution. It took the question of socialist revolution out of the realm of theory and made it real in the former Russian tsarist empire.

The October Revolution created a workers state based on workers councils (soviets) and roused the toilers to forge a Red Army that triumphed in a civil war against the counterrevolutionary White forces and the expeditionary forces of every major imperialist power. The Soviet government of Lenin and Trotsky expropriated both the Russian capitalist and Western imperialist holdings and repudiated outright Russia's massive debt to foreign bankers. It proclaimed the right of working people to jobs, health, housing and education, and took the first steps to building a socialist society.

The revolutionary government gave land to the peasants and self-determination to the many oppressed nations (themselves largely made up of peasants) of the former tsarist empire. It tore down the whole edifice of Russian patriarchal medievalism upon which the tsarist autocracy had rested. The early Soviet government not only separated church and state, it poured funds into secular education and science, promoting a thoroughly materialist worldview. It eliminated all laws discriminating against national and ethnic minorities and women. Soviet Russia eliminated all discriminatory laws, including against homosexuals. Soviet Russia was the first country of significance to give the vote to women, causing the Western capitalist "democracies" (e.g., the United States and Britain) to scramble to catch up.

The Bolshevik Revolution was seen from the beginning as only the start of what was to be a European-wide workers revolution. On the eve of the October uprising in Petrograd, the workers of the giant Putilov munitions factory and the pro-Bolshevik soldiers of the Pavlovsky Regiment exchanged banners of solidarity. The Putilov banner read: "Long Live the Russian Revolution as the Prologue to the Social Revolution in Europe!"

Internationally, the Bolshevik victory inspired revolutionary uprisings throughout Europe, most notably in Germany, Italy, Finland and Hungary. Its thunderous message of national and social emancipation also inspired the workers and rural toilers of the colonial world. The Bolsheviks launched the Communist International (Comintern), which by 1921 had attracted six million workers to its banner. And during its first four congresses, the Comintern educated and trained workers around the world in the program and strategy of revolutionary struggle. This was a massive factor in the world political arena.

AP

28 August 1940 memorial meeting for Leon Trotsky in New York reaffirms the Fourth International's mission to lead cause of October Revolution to world victory.

To give just one example: in the relatively politically backward USA, it was the leaders of the Russian Revolution who made the important connection between the cause of black liberation and workers revolution. Black poet Claude McKay tells the story of his 1922 visit to Soviet Russia, where he was feted by factory workers and Red Army soldiers:

> "At every meeting I was received with boisterous acclaim, mobbed with friendly demonstration. The women workers of the great bank in Moscow insisted on hearing about the working conditions of the colored women of America.... When I got through, the Russian women passed a resolution sending greetings to the colored women workers of America, exhorting them to organize their forces and send a woman representative to Russia."

McKay saw that this revolutionary spirit was not just a popular mood but also expressed the principles of the early Soviet government and Comintern:

> "When the Russian workers overturned their infamous government in 1917, one of the first acts of the new Premier, Lenin, was a proclamation greeting all the oppressed peoples throughout the world, exhorting them to organize and unite against the common international oppressor—Private Capitalism. Later on in Moscow, Lenin himself grappled with the question of the American Negroes and spoke on the subject before the Second Congress of the Third International. He consulted with John Reed, the American journalist, and dwelt on the urgent necessity of propaganda and organizational work among the Negroes of the South. The subject was not allowed to drop."

In short, a workers state, stretching across Eurasia, had emerged victorious from war and civil war and had launched a movement of the world's exploited and oppressed to expropriate the entire bourgeoisie and smash their imperialist order.

The Stalinist Political Counterrevolution and the Trotskyist Left Opposition

The bourgeoisie and its lackeys have done everything in their power to poison, or wipe out entirely, any memory of what the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet workers state were really about. They cynically push the lie of the "death of communism," but their real oath against the October Revolution is "Never again!" The biggest lie, the most effective slander, the one that weighs most heavily on the minds of workers and youth looking for an effective way to fight capitalism, is shared by open imperialist ideologues, social democrats, Stalinists and anarchists alike. They all claim that "Leninism led to Stalinism." The best answer to this is a Marxist materialist analysis of the qualitative changes in the USSR that made it possible for the Stalinist bureaucracy to usurp political control from the revolutionary core of the party and begin a process of anti-Leninist degeneration. This analysis also shows that against the Stalinist reaction, the banner of Leninism was carried forward by Trotsky's International Left Opposition, continuing with the Fourth International founded in 1938 and, today, our own International Communist League.

As powerful as the Bolshevik Revolution's international impact was, especially in Europe, the insurgent workers failed to take power elsewhere due to a lack of sufficiently capable revolutionary parties

continued on page 8

WV Graphic; Photo: Corbis

Anthony Suau

Capitalist death agony hits Russian proletariat with pauperism and plagues. Right: Chechen capital of Grozny shelled to rubble in 1995 as Russian Army reimposes capitalist prison house of peoples.

Young Spartacus

Black L.A. Anarchist Imprisoned for Thought Crimes

Free Sherman Austin Now!

We reprint below a 28 August leaflet by the Los Angeles Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club. Sherman Austin was incarcerated on September 3.

In recent years in Southern California, cops have savagely attacked anarchists at May Day, antiwar and other demonstrations, framing up the most outspoken youth on concocted criminal charges. The state crackdown on these young, especially black and Latino, anarchists as a "political fringe" to be harshly dealt with is meant to chill dissent by all left-wing activists. It intersects the "war on terror" pursued by the Bush government, with the Democrats in tow, to escalate attacks on working people and minorities as well as to carry out imperialist wars abroad. We Marxists of the SL/SYC say: *Down with government persecution of leftist youth!*

In the latest such attack, Sherman Austin, a black anarchist youth and webmaster of Raisethefist.com, was outrageously railroaded by the capitalist courts. On August 4, he was sentenced to 12 months in federal prison and three years of probation and fined $2,000 by District Court Judge Stephen V. Wilson on the trumped-up felony charge of "distributing explosives information with the intent that it be used in furtherance of a violent federal crime," based on a law originally sponsored by California Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein. Under his probationary "supervised release," his computer activity, telephone conversations and interactions with political activists will be under the thumb of federal probation officials. Even if he obtains official permission, use of a computer is grounds for the state to storm his residence unannounced and seize the equipment.

After enduring over two years of systematic state harassment, Austin was strong-armed into pleading guilty to a crime he did not commit under threat of additional "terrorist enhancement" charges, which could bring *up to 20 years in prison*, if he went to trial. The evidence provided was a link on his anarchist Web site to another site offering a "reclaim guide" with instructions on how to make simple, small incendiary devices. More detailed bomb-making information can be found on any number of Web sites, from Amazon.com to neo-Nazi sites, in any bookstore or in a public library.

Sherman said in an interview on Pacifica Radio (6 August) after the sentencing, "What they have to prove is that you have intent. It's almost like thought crime because of the way they prove it...you have 'intent' if you disagree with the current political system in this country right now." There is simply no way to prove that Austin "intended" for the information to be used by anyone for any purpose. Even the fictional cops of the sci-fi movie *Minority Report* would have a hard time trying to pull this one off!

The *political* intent of the court was to make an example of Austin. Judge Wilson criticized the prosecutor as being too *lenient* for agreeing to a plea bargain of four months in jail and four months in a halfway house, insisting that the prosecutor review the case with FBI director Robert S. Mueller and higher-ups in the Justice Department! At one point, the judge exclaimed: "This should be looked at with more of a deterrence outcome to future revolutionaries wanting to act in a similar manner." J. Edgar Hoover, notorious former director of the FBI—the COINTELPRO state spying agency—thundered in the 1960s that "the Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries." The FBI's COINTELPRO vendetta meant dozens of black militants like the Black Panthers were gunned down. Austin must report for incarceration in the first week of September. ***Drop the charges against him now!***

In the Pacifica interview after the sentencing, Austin's mother, Jennifer Martin, stated that her son was railroaded, commenting bitterly that "in our justice system...there is only justice for the rich." Austin was set up on bogus charges because he is a left-wing activist who has dared to stand up to the capitalists and their government and because his defiant ideas were read by thousands through his Web site. Now only 20 years old, Sherman Austin has been an active supporter of the struggles of workers and the oppressed since a teenager, joining Labor Day celebrations, protests against the imperialist slaughter in Iraq and rallies in support of the longshoremen's union (ILWU) during last year's contract battle and union-busting lockout.

The government's targeting of Austin began on May Day 2001 when he and 95 other youthful demonstrators were arrested at gunpoint during a cop riot against an anarchist "Carnival Against Capitalism" march in Long Beach, California. This marked the beginning of a well-organized effort by local police and county sheriffs, with the likely involvement of the Feds, to increase repression of L.A. area left-wing activists through systematic harassment, spying, intimidation, arrests and frame-up prosecutions. Austin was singled out for arrest by the Feds after attending a protest against the World Economic Forum in New York City in February 2002. After being subjected to more than two weeks of detention and interrogation in New York and Oklahoma prisons, he was released and all charges dropped due to lack of evidence. Though they had planned to fight the charges, after 9/11 most of the Long Beach May Day protesters accepted plea bargains, fearing that they could not get a fair trial in the capitalist courts amid the government's "anti-terrorist" hysteria.

Among these was Robert Middaugh (a/k/a Ruckus), who spent two years in prison after pleading guilty to felony assault on a police officer at the May Day demonstration, earning him his second strike—a third conviction under California's "three strikes" law could land him 25 years to life imprisonment. The first strike stemmed from his arrest at the 2000 Democratic National Convention protests.

Only a week after his release from prison earlier this month, federal marshals pounced on Middaugh with sham federal charges stemming from his arrest at a counter-protest on 4 July 2000 against a vile group of anti-immigrant demonstrators using the lawn of the Westwood Federal Building to spout racist filth. When a confrontation broke out, the cops predictably attacked the anti-racist demonstrators. A soda can thrown by an unknown person exploded on the ground, splashing a nearby cop who used this pretext to arrest Middaugh for felony assault on a federal officer. As Middaugh was being restrained by the chuckling cop, he

Indymedia

was assaulted by one of the racist demonstrators as the rest watched with apparent glee.

Later, Middaugh, dressed as a Zapatista, was charged with wearing a mask to conceal his identity and possession of a concealed weapon. The "concealed weapon" was a sheathed knife that was clearly visible over his clothes during the entire protest and therefore legal to carry. It became "concealed" only after the officer that searched him untucked his shirt. ***Drop all the charges against Robert Middaugh!***

The government has been busy slashing civil liberties, augmenting its police powers and passing draconian legislation like the USA-Patriot Act in order to intimidate the population while the American capitalists run roughshod over neocolonial peoples and stick it to workers and the poor at home. To fight state repression, youth must rally behind the social power of the working class. It is in the basic class interest of the workers to fight back against the bourgeoisie's assaults on democratic rights and its attempt to criminalize leftist political dissent. Ultimately only the overthrow of the capitalist system of exploitation through socialist revolution can put an end to racist oppression and war once and for all. As part of this struggle, it is imperative to defend leftist youth such as Sherman Austin and Robert Middaugh, whatever their particular political views, whom the government seeks to railroad to prison. ■

Spartacus Youth Club Classes & Events

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

September 16: **Socialism or Barbarism: Marxism, War and the Fight for Workers Revolution**

Columbia University, Location TBA
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

LOS ANGELES

Meet the Marxists

Tuesday, September 16, 12 noon
Student Lounge, CC Building
Pasadena City College
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

ICL Web Site: www.icl-fi.org

TORONTO

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.

September 20: **Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq! Canadian Troops Out of Afghanistan!**

Ontario Institute for Studies
in Education, Room 8200
252 Bloor St. West (above St. George Station)
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

BOSTON

Alternate Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

September 23: **Marxism: A Guide To Action**

BU College of Arts and Sciences,
Room B25A
725 Commonwealth Avenue
(BU East/Central on Green Line B)
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

This pamphlet presents a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins of anarchism and the views of its leading figures through the 1871 Paris Commune and the split in the First International and discusses the impact of the 1917 October Revolution. The first article addresses radical youth today who, in an ideological climate conditioned by the so-called "death of communism," are drawn to all variants of anarchism, Green radicalism and left liberalism. The pamphlet is dedicated to the fight to win a new generation to revolutionary Marxism.

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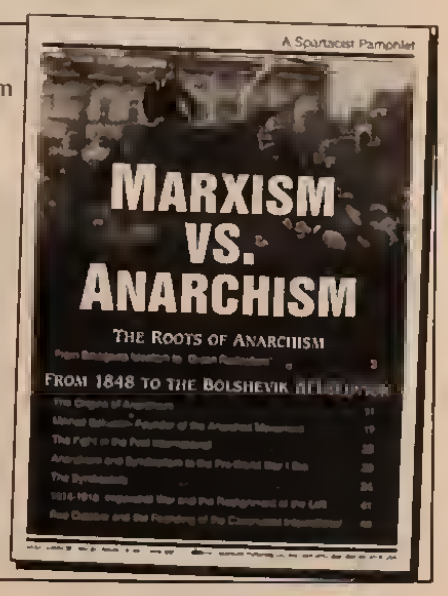


UMass Cops, National Guard Attack Antiwar Professor

Drop the Charges Against Tony Van Der Meer!

BOSTON—Africana Studies professor Tony Van Der Meer was race-baited by National Guard military recruiters, then tackled, thrown to the ground and arrested by cops at UMass-Boston on April 3, as he came to the defense of a student being harassed by the Guardsmen for handing out flyers for a commemoration honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Outrageously, Van Der Meer, a well-known local activist, now faces up to five years in prison on totally bogus charges of resisting arrest and assault on a police officer. This attack by the Guardsmen and cops on a black professor and a student on their own campus happened at the height of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. The assault starkly illuminates the deadly connection between American capitalism's imperialist slaughter abroad and racist terror at home.

UMass student Tony Naro, wearing his "Military Recruitment Off My Campus" t-shirt, was handing out the flyers near a National Guard table in the McCormick Hall lobby when a military recruiter charged up to him with the racist rant (in a reference to King's assassination): "You should be shot in the head too." When Professor Van Der Meer, passing by, came over to defend Naro, the Guardsman poked him, saying he should also get shot in the head. Then the UMass cops jumped in, throwing Van Der Meer to the ground so hard his jacket was ripped and a lens popped out of his glasses. Van Der Meer was chained to a wall at the campus police headquarters, photographed, fingerprinted, then taken to the Dorchester courthouse, where he was put in leg shackles and locked up until his arraignment. "The way I was treated, I felt like a runaway slave," Van Der Meer said. "As a teacher of black history, how could I not?"

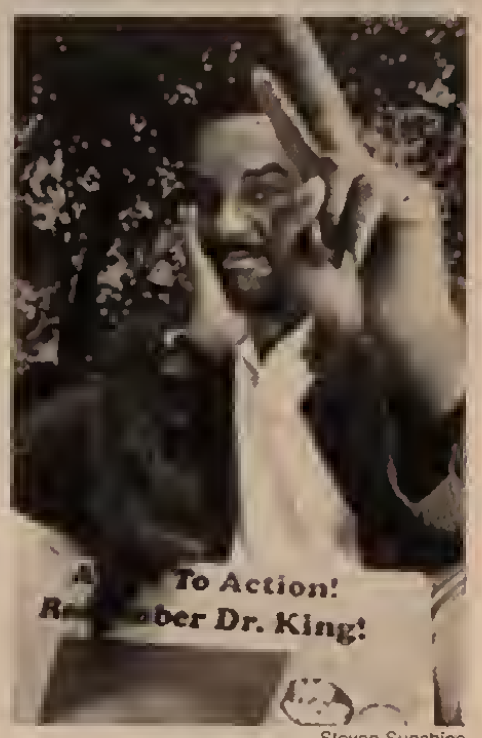
The brutality unleashed against Tony Van Der Meer for standing up to the government's military thugs and cops on campus is just one small example of the massive violence used by the capitalist class to ram through its imperialist agenda. The plan: to send poor and working-class youth, blacks and Latinos to die in wars of imperialist aggression, while tightening the screws on the working class and chilling dissent at home. Professor Van Der Meer received many harassing telephone messages after his arrest, including one proclaiming support for "Bush and the Boys," and an audio clip from the movie *Full Metal Jacket* with a scene of a soldier saying his gun had no regard for "N-----s, S---s and Jews." That this government's "war on terror" is a war on blacks is reaffirmed daily, from the police occupation of the black neighborhood of Benton Harbor, Michigan, to the recent wave of cop killings of black people, many in their own homes. The power of the integrated working class must be mobilized in the fight against racist police terror.

As part of its drive for world dominance, the U.S. capitalist state is making a renewed push to get its military tentacles firmly gripped around college campuses. Of course, the nation's elite universities, including many in Boston, have always been bases for research and development in the service of American imperialism's military machine. The Spartacist League and its youth affiliates, the Spartacus Youth Clubs, call for military recruiters off campus as part of our fight against U.S. capitalism. Military recruiters, the National Guard and ROTC are integral parts of the armed fist of the capitalist state, stretched out on campus to suck youth into the maw of the imperialist war machine.

The Boston Spartacus Youth Club joined protests against this outrageous assault, pointing out in a letter to the UMass-Boston chancellor that was printed in the campus paper, *The Mass Media* (24 April):

> "As the U.S. imperialists rain thousands of cruise missiles on Iraq and deploy over 200,000 troops for colonial occupation, the forces of the state are deployed in Boston to harass antiwar students and professors seeking to exercise their democratic rights. The attack on Professor Van Der Meer is part of the campaign to criminalize dissent as the government wages war abroad and ravages the working class, blacks and immigrants at home. Increasingly, the only 'right' the government sees fit to grant students and working class youth is the right to enlist in a branch of the military as fodder for U.S. imperialism's wars. We demand: Military recruiters off campus now! Drop the charges against Tony Van Der Meer!"

At a united-front demonstration called



Steven Sunshine

by the SYC at Boston University on April 14, under the slogans "All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with attacks on antiwar protesters!", SYC speakers raised the need to defend Tony Van Der Meer. The SYC and Spartacist League also participated in a solidarity demonstration of over 60 people outside the Dorchester courthouse on July 16. The next hearing on his case is set for November 6 at the same location.

We urge our readers to join in defense of Tony Van Der Meer. You can mail contributions toward his defense to: Professor Van Der Meer's Support Committee, P.O. Box 1014, Boston, MA 02117. Or check info@bostonmajustice.org for more information.■

Yale Strike...

(continued from page 12)

increases for workers who after 20 years of employment receive $621 a month as a pension! In contrast, Yale president Richard Levin is guaranteed a pension of as much as $42,000 a month when he retires, while currently he rakes in over half a million dollars a year.

In addition to starvation wages and pensions for union members, Yale continues to insist on its right to subcontract union jobs to non-union contractors. As one Local 34 member noted: "It's more of like a plantation mentality that they have. It's like we're just here to do the work, and we should be thankful for the crumbs that fall from the table" (*New Haven Register*, 27 August). Indeed, the Yale bosses stand not too far removed from the plantation mentality of the slaveholders who helped found the university and after whom most of its residential colleges are named.

Members of the New York Spartacus Youth Club have gone to New Haven to join the picket lines in support of the strike. Reflecting the animosity of most New Haven residents toward the Yale bosses is a high level of community support for the strike—SYCers report that a chorus of supportive car horns would greet workers carrying "On Strike" placards everywhere they went. Union members told us many stories about how black people are the last hired and the first fired by Yale, and are consigned to the worst shifts. They also told us of the many union-busting strategies employed by Yale, including paying non-union new hires at the hospital more than union employees with greater seniority. Union-busting threats and harassment culminated last fall in the arrest by hospital police of eight union members for leafletting outside a building shared by the Yale-New Haven Hospital and Yale School of Medicine (the charges were later dropped). Working hand in glove with the company town bosses they are hired to serve, the New Haven cops have arrested more than 100 protesting strike supporters since the current strike began. We demand: *Drop the charges against all Yale strikers and strike supporters!*

The Spartacus Youth Club calls on all those students who are repulsed by Yale's arrogant and racist contempt for the working people they routinely exploit to mobilize in support of the unions. That hundreds of classes have been moved off campus by sympathetic professors and TAs is a well-intentioned gesture. However, it still continues the business of the university with a minimum of disruption. What is needed is united action by students, teachers and staff to build mass pickets that *nobody* crosses. *The whole university should be shut down!* Students can concretely forge an alliance with the workers through a full-scale boycott of classes and joining the pickets. The slogan raised by SYCers, "Picket lines mean don't cross!", has been met with wide approval from the strikers. *Victory to the strike!*

The SYC seeks to link the struggles of students with the power of the labor movement as a whole. That includes the struggle against the inherent race and class bias of higher education under capitalism of which Yale is a prime example. A look at the list of some of Yale's more prominent graduates (including the last three U.S. imperial presidents) demonstrates that this is a training ground for the children of the ruling class and the tacticians and technocrats whose jobs are to perpetuate the racist status quo. The SYCs fight for free, quality education for all, for open admissions and no tuition with a living stipend so that all have access to a decent education. Private institutions such as Yale should be nationalized—that means that Yale's iron gates should be thrown open, including to those who work there and their children!

As Marxists, we recognize that the interests of workers and the oppressed are counterposed to those of the capitalists—the entire capitalist system is premised on the exploitation of workers by the ruling class. However, the leaders of the striking unions have paraded capitalist Democratic Party politicians at their rallies, including two presidential hopefuls, Joseph Lieberman and Howard Dean, and Jesse Jackson, who was arrested at a strike rally.

This is part of the AFL-CIO tops' efforts to revive the Democrats for next year's presidential elections. Proving that they are no less a party of racism and war than the Republicans, the Democrats hacked the U.S. war of colonial conquest against Iraq, and in fact have been the most vociferous advocates of U.S. imperialist intervention in Liberia. The Democrats have also stood foursquare behind the panoply of anti-immigrant, anti-labor "war on terror" laws at home. By pushing the Democratic "friends of labor," the union misleaders are pushing the lie that there is a unity of interests between the working class and the racist imperialist rulers. As in any labor struggle, what is posed is the need to break the unions' ties to the Democrats, the "soft cops" of American capitalism.

Workers need to forge a party that fights for their interests—a party committed to sweeping away the capitalist system that is predicated on unemployment, poverty, racial oppression and war. The SYC seeks to win youth to the perspective of building such a party, which will turn defensive struggles into an offensive for socialist revolution and workers power. It is as part of that struggle that we call on pro-working-class student youth to join us in supporting the Yale strikers. *Build picket lines—don't cross them! Boycott classes! Shut down Yale! Victory to the Yale strikers!*■

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Soviet Union...

(continued from page 5)

similar to the Bolshevik Party in Russia. This meant that by the end of 1923 Soviet Russia for the first time had come face to face with an indefinite but prolonged period of isolation. Although the Bolshevik Red Army had successfully repulsed all of the imperialist invasions and won the Civil War, Soviet Russia emerged from this exhausted and bled white.

Industry was in ruins and the vibrant proletariat that had accomplished the 1917 Revolution had practically ceased to exist as a class. Soviet Russia had counted on the material resources of a European workers revolution to help it quickly rebuild its infrastructure and industries, which had been devastated by seven years of interimperialist war and then civil war. And this was all the more urgent as Russia was shackled with a technically and socially backward agricultural base. And now the postwar famine in the countryside had reached the point of cannibalism.

Not only had the revolution's social base and the world context changed, so had its leadership. The most conscious and experienced layers of revolutionary workers, and many of the Bolshevik cadre of 1917, had died on the front lines of the Civil War. By the time of Lenin's death in 1924, only about 2 percent of the Communist Party had pre-revolutionary experience, extensive Marxist schooling or a familiarity with what the European workers movement was really like. Many of the veteran Bolshevik militants who survived the Civil War were co-opted into the state and ruling Communist Party apparatus (and necessarily so). But this did tend to tear them away from what remained of the working class.

Under these conditions, a new conservative and bureaucratized layer in the party and state apparatus came to the fore, intent on preserving its relatively privileged status amid extreme poverty, scarcity and imperialist hostility. The defeat of the emerging Left Opposition by these forces at the rigged 13th Party Conference in January 1924 marked the qualitative point at which the bureaucratic caste seized political power—from then on, the people who ruled the USSR, the way the USSR was ruled and the purposes for which it was ruled all changed. This was a *political* counterrevolution rather than a social one, because the nascent bureaucracy hijacked the governmental apparatus but did not overturn the socialized property forms created by October. But the struggle did not end there. It took a series of bloody purges through the 1930s for the Stalin clique to consolidate its rule. Throughout, Trotsky's Left Opposition continued the fight for authentic Bolshevism and in defense of October.

In place of the October Revolution's banner of world socialist revolution, Stalin in the autumn of 1924 put forward the false dogma of impossible economic autarky and isolationism known as "socialism in one country." As the Kremlin bureaucracy gradually became more conscious of its position, this "theory" became the ideological justification for transforming the foreign Communist parties into bargaining chips in an illusory search for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. Over the coming decades, it meant the strangulation of one after another opportunity for socialist revolution in the capitalist countries.

On eve of 1917 October Revolution: Putilov factory workers' banner (right) reads, "Long Live the Russian Revolution as the Prologue to Social Revolution in Europe!" Workers rally in Petrograd train station to form Red Guards.

VAAP

Novosti

From the mid 1920s until he was assassinated by a Stalinist agent in 1940, Leon Trotsky—co-leader with Lenin of the October Revolution—sought to rally communist militants throughout the world on the basis of the authentic principles and program of Bolshevism (i.e., revolutionary Marxism). In 1933, when the Stalinists' failure to prevent Hitler's rise to power in Germany did not even precipitate any fundamental struggle within the Comintern to change course, Trotsky called for new parties and a new, Fourth International. The 1938 Transitional Program of the Trotskyist Fourth International defined the Soviet Union under Stalin as a bureaucratically degenerated workers state and laid out the two basic historical alternatives confronting it:

> "The USSR thus embodies terrific contradictions. But it still remains *a degenerated workers' state*. Such is the social diagnosis. The political prognosis has an alternative character: either the bureaucracy, becoming ever more the organ of the world bourgeoisie in the workers' state, will overthrow the new forms of property and plunge the country back to capitalism; or the working class will crush the bureaucracy and open the way to socialism."

Trotsky posed a program to *resolve this contradiction in the positive* through the program and methods of Bolshevik internationalism. As he put it in the last great political struggle of his life, the 1939-40 fight against an anti-Soviet opposition led by Max Shachtman and James Burnham in the American Socialist Workers Party:

> "We must formulate our slogans in such a way that the workers see clearly just what we are defending in the USSR (state property and planned economy), and against whom we are conducting a ruthless struggle (the parasitic bureaucracy and its Comintern). We must not lose sight for a single moment of the fact that the question of overthrowing the Soviet bureaucracy is for us subordinate to the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR; that the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR is subordinate for us to the question of the world proletarian revolution."
>
> —"The USSR in War" (September 1939), *In Defense of Marxism* (Pathfinder, 1973)

Contradictions of Soviet Economic Growth

Even though strapped by imperialist encirclement and bureaucratic parasitism and mismanagement, the USSR proved the superior capacities of a collectivized planned economy to unleash productive forces. In *The Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936 when the capitalist world was mired in an economic depression, Trotsky pointed out that over the previous six years the Soviet Union had increased its industrial production by three and a half times. Over the previous ten years (1925 to 1935), heavy industry in the USSR had increased its production more than tenfold:

> "Socialism has demonstrated its right to victory, not on the pages of *Das Kapital*, but in an industrial arena comprising a sixth part of the earth's surface—not in the language of dialectics, but in the language of steel, cement and electricity. Even if the Soviet Union, as a result of internal difficulties, external blows and the mistakes of its leadership, were to collapse—which we firmly hope will not happen—there would remain as an earnest of the future this indestructible fact, that thanks solely to a proletarian revolution a backward country has achieved in less than ten years successes unexampled in history."

But in contrast to the Stalinist lie that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country, Trotsky warned that:

> "The dynamic coefficients of Soviet industry are unexampled. But they are still far from decisive. The Soviet Union is lifting itself from a terribly low level, while the capitalist countries are slipping down from a very high one. The correlation of forces at the present moment is determined not by the rate of growth, but by contrasting the entire power of the two camps as expressed in material accumulations, technique, culture and, above all, the productivity of human labor. When we approach the matter from this statistical point of view, the situation changes at once, and to the extreme disadvantage of the Soviet Union.
>
> "The question formulated by Lenin—*Who shall prevail?*—is a question of the correlation of forces between the Soviet Union and the world revolutionary proletariat on the one hand, and on the other international capital and the hostile forces within the Union. The economic successes of the Soviet Union make it possible for her to fortify herself, advance, arm herself, and, when necessary, retreat and wait—in a word, hold out. But in its essence the question, Who shall prevail—not only as a military, but still more as an economic question—confronts the Soviet Union on a world scale."

The same Bolshevik internationalism that guided the October Revolution determined the Left Opposition's economic perspectives for the USSR: the international productive forces had to be torn out of the hands of the imperialists; the profit system and the bourgeois nation-state had to be scrapped by an international socialist revolution.

Trotsky also explained that the Stalinist bureaucracy was capable of extensive but not intensive economic growth. What does that mean? It means that the Kremlin oligarchy could and did expand the Soviet economy by crudely transplanting advanced capitalist methods and even entire factories from abroad, but it was incapable of constantly raising the overall level of technology and labor productivity. As Trotsky put it in *The Revolution Betrayed*: "Under a nationalized economy, *quality* demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative—conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies and flattery."

I can tell you a firsthand story about how the Stalinist bureaucracy blocked high-tech advancement. In 1991, I went to the editorial offices of *Pravda*, the main CPSU newspaper, in Moscow as part of my job and got a tour of the printing plant. To my amazement, I saw typesetting was still done in "hot type," that is, a technology superseded decades ago in the West. The bureaucrats preferred this lumbering, laborious method because it was so much easier to politically monitor and control than computerized printing processes. After the tour, I was taken upstairs to *Pravda*'s "emergency room" housing two parallel state of the art Macintosh-Linotronic systems allowing a special crew to supplant the entire operation below in the event of strikes and other disruptions. That was the heart of it: only a specialty vetted and monitored crew could be trusted with powerful information technology.

Nonetheless, the USSR was able to sustain a bounding, extensive economic

Just Out! Marxist Studies No. 9

This volume of *Marxist Studies*, a series of bulletins for the education of Marxist cadres, contains the transcripts of four classes given in 1988-89 throughout the International Communist League dealing with the first four (1919-1922) Congresses of the Communist International. Also included are the list of related readings and a general chronology (1912-1924) of relevant events.

Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, the first four Comintern Congresses addressed the tasks facing the newly formed Communist parties and codified the lessons of the October 1917 Revolution. The decisions of the Congresses provide precious material for those seeking to carry forward the international working-class perspectives of Marxism and fight for new October Revolutions.

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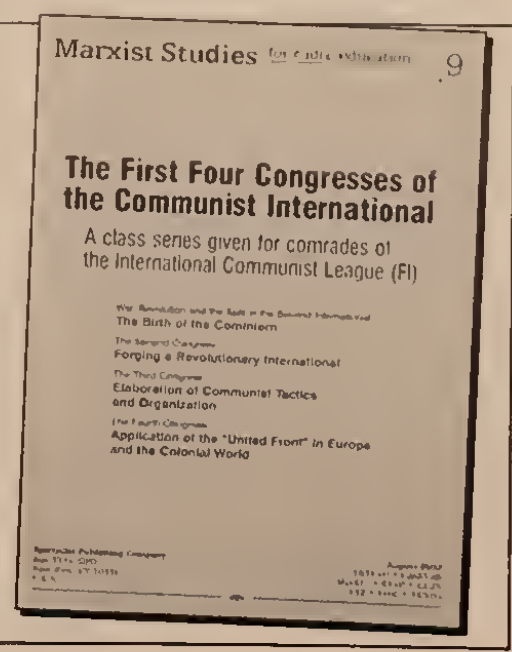
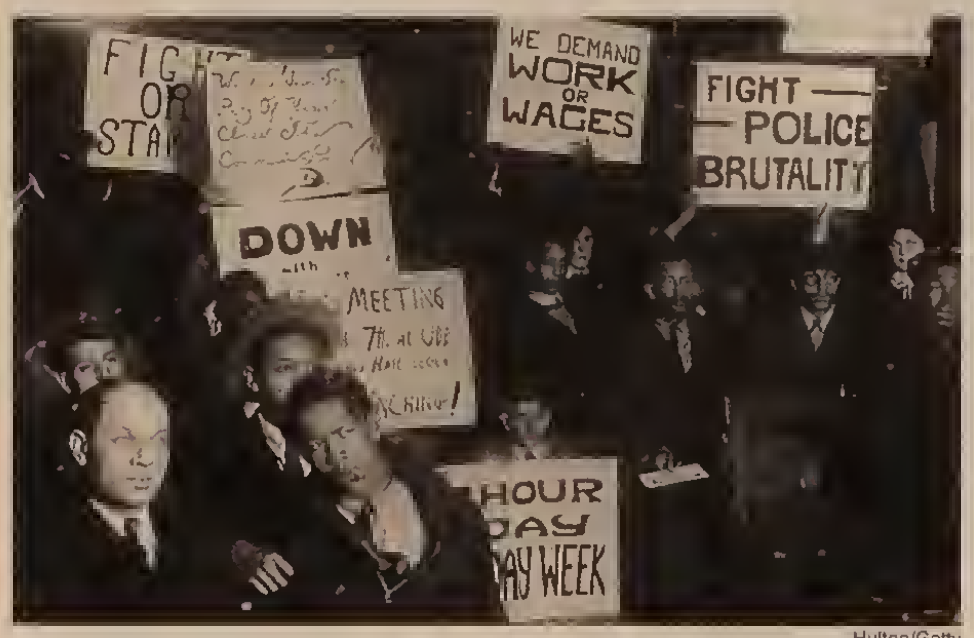


growth well into the 1960s. As long as additional layers of workers were drawn from Russia's vast countryside into the cities, it also meant that overall labor productivity in the Soviet Union continued to rise as well. However, the limits and contradictions of Soviet economic growth came to the fore in the last part of the lengthy regime of Leonid Brezhnev, who occupied the Kremlin from the mid 1960s until the early 1980s.

During the first half of this period, American imperialism was bogged down in the long, losing war in Vietnam. One consequence was that the USSR was able to achieve approximate nuclear military parity with the U.S. The Soviet economy also got a big boost in the early 1970s from the multiple increases in the world-market price of oil. However, in the late 1970s the new Democratic administration of U.S. president Jimmy Carter launched a renewed Cold War offensive against the Soviet bloc in the name of "human rights," combining increased military, economic and political pressure.

The Brezhnev regime responded by continuing to invest heavily in defense, seeking to maintain nuclear parity with the U.S. It also continued to buy domestic stability by maintaining and even improving the living standards of the Soviet working class and collective farmers. But these economic policies came at the *expense of investment in the technological renewal of Soviet industry*. By the late 1970s, the steady annual economic growth rate of 5 percent of the past two decades had fallen to about half that. And by the beginning of the 1980s, the economy was clearly stagnating, in the face of the imperialist anti-Soviet offensive.



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1930 meeting of CP-initiated International Labor Defense, Washington, D.C. James P. Cannon: "Everything new and progressive on the Negro question came from Moscow, after the revolution of 1917, and as a result of the revolution."

The Final Undoing of the October Revolution

As the USSR began to fall behind Western capitalism dramatically, growing sections of the bureaucracy became convinced that the Soviet economy could never catch up on its own, and chose to cut back the massive burden of military spending by offering "partnership" to imperialism. Hostile from the outset to workers democracy and the fight for international extension of the revolution as the road to socialist development, Stalin's heirs now repudiated the ideology of "socialism in one country" in the negative, in favor of increasingly open expressions of belief in the economic superiority of Western-type capitalism. Underlying this ideological attitude was the appetite of these privileged social strata, especially the younger layer of intellectuals and bureaucratic functionaries, to further enrich themselves at the expense of the working class.

The accelerating rightward slide of the Soviet bureaucracy and affiliated intelligentsia was represented by the new regime of the younger CPSU leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who took over the Kremlin in 1985. Restraints were eased on intellectual and, later, political life under the banner of *glasnost* (openness). Centralized economic planning and management were scrapped and replaced by market-directed mechanisms under the rubric of *perestroika* (restructuring). A global policy of appeasing and capitulating to Western (centrally American) imperialism was carried out in the name of "new thinking."

The war in Afghanistan during the 1980s was a crucial turning point in the fate of the USSR and therefore of world history. In December 1979, Brezhnev's Kremlin intervened militarily in Afghanistan to shore up a strategically important client state along the southern border of Soviet Central Asia. The modernizing bourgeois-nationalist regime in Kabul had repeatedly requested Soviet aid against a reactionary Islamic insurgency—backed and armed by the U.S.—which had been provoked by the regime's modest social reforms, especially those which improved the horribly oppressed condition of Afghan women.

It came as a surprise to Moscow when the Americans escalated this insurgency into a massive proxy war against the Soviet Union, launching the biggest CIA covert operation in history. Jimmy Carter's chief foreign policy adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, later bragged about how they had long planned to bleed the Soviets. Texas Democratic Congressman Charles Wilson spelled it out at the time: "There were 58,000 [American] dead in Vietnam, and we owe the Russians one."

E.P. Dutton

Bolsheviks began October Revolution mission of liberating oppressed women of the East with literacy campaigns.

This should have been an easy war for any leftist to take a principled stand on. It was doubly progressive, posing both the fate of women and elemental social progress in Afghanistan together with the defense of the USSR's southern flank. But under the onslaught of the war hysteria cranked out by the U.S. ruling class—beginning with Jimmy Carter's "human rights" demagogy and escalating to Ronald Reagan's crusade against the Soviet "evil empire"—a defining moment took place for the "left" internationally. Here in the U.S., Vietnam War-era prodigal sons of the Democratic Party rushed to redeem themselves before their imperialist rulers by showing how fervently they now opposed the "Soviet Vietnam."

Against the liberals and their "left" hangers-on, we raised the slogans: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and "Extend gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!" Against all the demagogy about "Afghan national rights," we explained that Afghanistan was not even a nation but an extremely backward country inhabited by diverse and mutually hostile ethnic groups. The only possible basis for social progress in Afghanistan at that time was the extension of Soviet military and political power. The Red Army intervention cut against the grain of the nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country." Our internationalist line, while aimed primarily against the CIA-backed *mujahedin, at the same time promoted political revolution against the Kremlin Stalinists.*

Contrary to the imperialist Big Lie campaign, the Soviet armed forces were *winning* against the CIA's *mujahedin*. It was not out of military necessity but for the sake of Gorbachev's hoped-for strategic "partnership" with American imperialism that the Soviets pulled the last troops out of Afghanistan in 1989. Gorbachev's policy in Afghanistan gave a green light to dumping Soviet-era "socialist and national liberation" pretensions. What we heard in the USSR at this point was outright racist Russian chauvinism like, "Afghan 'blacks' are not worth the blood of our Russian boys." These types were fed up with the massive Soviet subsidies to Cuba, Vietnam, East Europe and Moscow's Third World capitalist client regimes.

Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze later conceded that surrendering Afghanistan was the key to what followed globally: "The decision to leave Afghanistan was the first and most difficult step. Everything else flowed from that" (*Washington Post*, 16 November 1992). Indeed, after Afghanistan Gorbachev threw East Europe to the imperialist wolves as well. Finally, he oversaw the destruction of the USSR.

As we declared in 1990 in the first issue of our Russian-language *Byulleten' Spartakovtsev* (Spartacist Bulletin): "Far better to have fought imperialism through an honorable fight in Afghanistan than to have to now fight it within the borders of the Soviet Union" (see *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 45-46, Winter 1990-91). Days before Gorbachev pulled out the last Soviet units, the Partisan Defense Committee, the class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the SL/U.S., sent a 7 February 1989 letter to the Afghan government offering "to organize an international brigade to fight to the death" to defend "the right of women to read, freedom from the veil, freedom from the tyranny of the mullahs and the landlords, the introduction of medical care and the right of all to an education." Though this offer was declined, the PDC and fraternal defense organizations allied with other sections of the ICL raised over $44,000 to aid civilian victims of an all-out *mujahedin* offensive later that year against Jalalabad, the Afghan city closest to the CIA's guerrilla bases in Pakistan. Those emergency funds were gathered from working people throughout the world, including of Muslim origin. They rejoiced when the attack on Jalalabad was defeated!

But our campaign had an even greater significance. It signaled that the banner of communism trampled in the mud of Afghanistan by the defeatist Stalinists had its true champions in the Trotskyists! It was at that moment in 1989 that the international Spartacist tendency became the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

[TO BE CONTINUED]

no credit

WV Photo

Afghan women took up arms against Islamic reactionaries to defend gains made possible by Soviet Army intervention. Trotskyists hailed Red Army in Afghanistan, organized support for besieged women and leftists following Kremlin's treacherous 1989 withdrawal.

North Korea...

(continued from page 1)

control and international security, in testimony before Congress this summer, the goal of the Bush administration's naval "interdiction" and "seizure" provocations is to develop "new means to disrupt the proliferation trade at sea, in the air, and on land" (*New York Times*, 18 August). More concisely, the destruction of the North Korean deformed workers state is the goal of these efforts.

Bolton is a super hawk, provided by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), a neoconservative think tank, to justify America *über alles* policies. Currently this ghoul is on a short leash as the Bush administration's most recent pretense is to be open to negotiations with Pyongyang, e.g., at the Beijing talks. The world-conquering aspirations of U.S. imperialism are in part currently mitigated by the fact that its ground forces are bogged down in the bloody occupation of Iraq.

The *New York Times* (3 September) reported an interview with Bolton last year in which he was asked to account for seeming U.S. policy inconsistencies in dealing with North Korea. Bolton "strode over to a bookshelf, pulled off a volume and slapped it on the table. It was called 'The End of North Korea,' by an American Enterprise Institute colleague. 'That,' he said, 'is our policy'." The bible of U.S. imperialism as translated by the AEI intellectual lackeys has several books—The End of the USSR, The End of China, The End of Cuba, etc.

In pursuit of their own imperialist aims, Korea's former Japanese overlords have also been on an offensive to bring North Korea to its knees and to pursue their regional military ambitions. Seizing on North Korean missile and nuclear capacity as a pretext, Tokyo has allocated $1.2 billion to begin building a "missile defense system" that would threaten both the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states, while a number of leading government figures openly talk of acquiring a nuclear arsenal. The Japanese coast guard is joining the U.S. and Australia in the upcoming "Pacific Protector" exercises in the Coral Sea. Days before the Beijing talks, Japanese authorities at the port of Niigata-Nishi seized the North Korean ferry *Mangyongbong-92*, which ethnic Koreans heavily rely on. In Japan, the anti-North Korea offensive has taken the form of a chauvinist frenzy against ethnic Koreans and their schools and organizations, including over 300 bombing and other attacks and threats. This chauvinist hysteria was particularly whipped up following recent revelations of bizarre and indefensible abductions of Japanese nationals by the Pyongyang regime in the 1970s and '80s. As our comrades of the Spartacist Group Japan have repeatedly stressed, defense of North Korea and of the Korean minority in Japan go hand in hand.

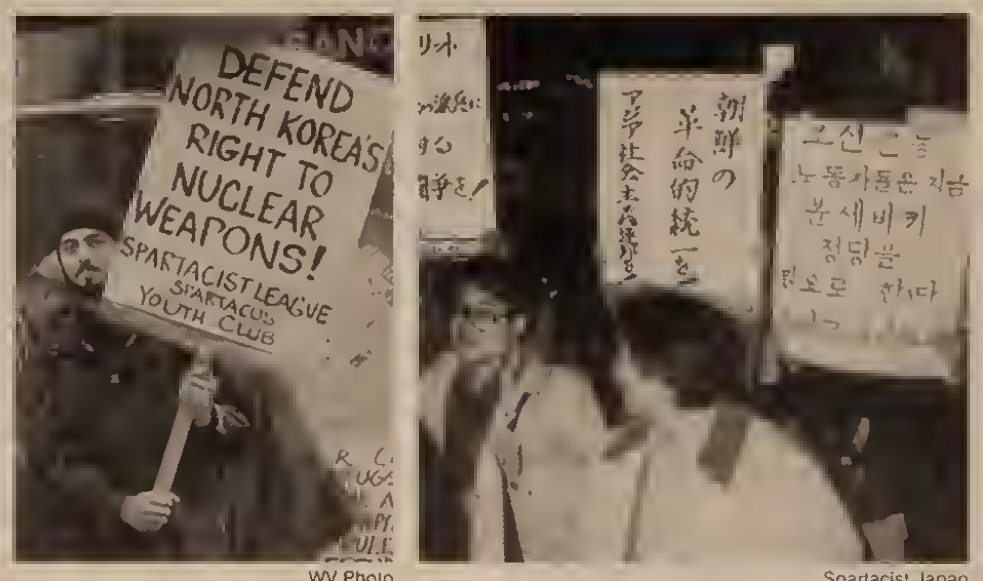
Beijing Stalinists' Treachery

North Korea's current plight—malnutrition, the absence of access to critical resources and the decay of its industry—is the direct product of the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution, led by Boris Yeltsin and Bush Sr., in the USSR, which had been the North's main economic partner. For a quarter century after the Korean War, the North prospered in contrast to the imperialist-dominated South. In fact, as the London *Guardian* (11 March) reports, "During the 1970s North Korea was the 20th-richest country in the world."

The North Korean bureaucracy's current policy—to use the threat of nuclear armaments to demand U.S. assistance and a peace treaty "guaranteeing" that the American imperialists foreswear any hostile intervention—is simply militant-sounding begging. If codified, such a deal would be substantially less valuable than a deed to the Brooklyn Bridge. Such a deal would entail the return of international "nuclear inspectors" to North Korea, whose only purpose would be to ensure that the country is incapable of defending itself against an American attack—just as the UN inspectors did in Iraq.

As we wrote in "Defend North Korea!" (*WV* No. 784, 12 July 2002), "The international working class must defend the right of the deformed workers states to have nuclear weapons to defend themselves against the imperialist war criminals. Had the Soviet Union not possessed a nuclear arsenal capable of deterring U.S. imperialism, there would have been no Cuban Revolution, no Vietnamese Revolution, and China and Korea would be irradiated rubble." A big reason that the U.S. felt it could just roll over Iraq was that that small capitalist country did not have any nuclear weapons, which are about the only real measure of sovereignty in today's world.

The only guarantee for the survival and extension of the gains of social revolution lies in the victory of proletarian revolution in the advanced industrial societies and ultimately on a worldwide scale. It is this perspective that is opposed by the respective nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies that rule the workers states, as this perspective threatens their parasitic caste rule. Thus, these castes seek deals with the imperialists to assure their continued existence; that is, they seek "socialist paradises" within an imperialist heaven.



WV Photo | Spartacist Japan

San Francisco, February 16: Spartacist placard at protest against Iraq war. Right: Spartacist Group Japan placard reads: "For the Revolutionary Reunification of Korea! For a Socialist Federation of Asia!"

Witness the People's Republic of China. Until recently, the ruling caste in Beijing has usually recognized that U.S. imperialism's bellicosity toward North Korea was a threat to its own continued existence. Nearly a million People's Liberation Army soldiers played a decisive role in the defeat of the U.S. in the Korean War, which China entered when it correctly perceived that it was itself threatened. But for Mao's regime—as for all Stalinist bureaucracies—international solidarity was always subordinate to its own narrow nationalist interests. The ruling Stalinist bureaucracies justify such nationalist policies by falsely claiming that they are building "socialism" in their own respective countries.

By the late 1960s, for example, the differences between the Moscow and Beijing bureaucracies had escalated to the point of military clashes along the border. The relative weakness of China had earlier led the Beijing bureaucracy to strike a more militant posture vis-à-vis U.S. imperialism than Moscow. However, by the early 1970s Beijing had struck an alliance with U.S. imperialism in opposition to what it was then casting as its main enemy, the purportedly "social imperialist" USSR.

Over the past 25 years, the Beijing bureaucracy's conciliation of imperialism has gone hand in hand with the policy of capitalist "market reforms" within China itself. This has led to increasing penetration of China by the overseas Chinese bourgeoisie and foreign imperialists. This development has simultaneously undermined the statified sectors of the economy and increasingly drawn layers of the bureaucracy, in hand with outright capitalist elements on the mainland, into the nexus of imperialist economic obligations.

No small factor in Beijing's treacherous offer to broker the disarmament of North Korea is the growing trade between mainland China and the South Korean capital. In March, China, which provides North Korea with upwards of half its imported grain and enough fuel oil to provide one-third of its energy needs, cut off fuel oil supplies for three days in response to a North Korean missile test. Beijing's willingness to betray its North Korean counterparts is a danger to the Chinese deformed workers state itself, which remains the main strategic target of U.S. imperialist ambitions. The Chinese government has itself felt obliged to condemn Washington's bellicosity toward North Korea.

As Leon Trotsky pointed out in his brilliant analysis of the degeneration of the Bolshevik Revolution, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937), the Stalinist caste is the main internal obstacle to defending the gains of social revolution, necessitating the overthrow of the bureaucracy by proletarian political revolution. In China, workers in the hundreds of thousands, as well as masses of impoverished peasants thrown off the land by the dismantling of collectivized agriculture, have protested the erosion of the gains of the 1949 Revolution. The regime's policies are simultaneously creating an epicenter for capitalist restoration and preparing the ground for an enormous explosion of proletarian outrage. The urgent task facing the Chinese working class is to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead such social explosions toward a proletarian political revolution.

Successful political revolution in China—establishing the rule of workers and peasants soviets committed to defending and extending the collectivized economy—would offer the North Korean workers a way out of imperialist encirclement and isolation. Conversely, a counterrevolutionary overturn in North Korea would not only mean even greater poverty and immiseration in that country but would be a dagger aimed at the gains of the Chinese Revolution, putting the forces of capitalist restoration on the border of China's heartland of nationalized industry.

The prospect for socialism on the Korean peninsula lies with linking the North Korean proletariat with the working class of the South. These workers are currently involved in widespread class battles against the economic depredations stemming from the 1997-98 financial crisis, which are all the more intensified since, with the destruction of the USSR, South Korea has lost its favored status as a U.S. asset on the front lines of the Cold War. When South Korea's rulers pleaded for assistance from Washington and Tokyo in 1997, they had the door slammed in their faces. Indeed, the door to the imperialists' elite club was slammed shut by the 1890s and not since reopened.

The Pyongyang bureaucracy has long promoted "peaceful" reunification with the capitalist South, seeking to unite with nationalist forces in South Korea unhappy with American overlordship. For their part, sections of the *chaebol* conglomerates that dominate South Korean capitalism are looking to reunify Korea on the basis of capitalist wage slavery, as exemplified by Seoul's "Sunshine Policy" toward the North. Korean nationalism, promoted by both the North Korean bureaucracy and the South Korean left, serves to tie the powerful South Korean proletariat to its own ruling class. We fight for the ***revolutionary*** reunification of Korea, through socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution in the North.

The defense of social revolutions in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba requires the forging of an international Trotskyist party that recognizes and intransigently fights to defend and extend the existing gains against imperialist or domestically-inspired capitalist counterrevolution. This defense is inseparable from the fight for socialist revolutions in the advanced industrial societies, importantly for Asia in the industrial powerhouse of Japan, and in the U.S. belly of the imperialist beast. The ICL directs all its resources and efforts to forging the international proletarian vanguard party needed to carry out this task.■

L.A. Transit...

(continued from page 2)

hands of the courts, the ATU leadership is again trying to erode workers' consciousness of the most basic principles of labor solidarity. On August 28, they called a rally, which drew some 200 maintenance workers, outside MTA headquarters—where many ATU and TCIU members work—as a way of letting off steam by union members angry at the bosses' hardline stance. Calling this an "informational picket line" which workers were expected to cross unless they worked another shift or got company-approved time off undercuts the real meaning of a strike picket and the consciousness that ***picket lines mean don't cross***, and paves the way for the kind of scabherding Silver attempted three years ago.

The situation cries out for ***one industrial union of all transit workers***, instead of dividing transit workers into different bargaining units by craft (drivers, mechanics, clerks). Even more, if MTA workers go on strike, then all transit unions in the L.A. region should strike in solidarity, including Metrolink and other regional bus lines. It is also necessary to reach out to the ghetto and barrio masses for support and solidarity on the picket lines. Championing the interests of the oppressed, including through the demand for free mass transit, is the way to build real "public" support.

The pro-capitalist UTU and ATU transit union leaders who looked to Gray Davis in 2000 and again this year portray the capitalist Democratic Party as "friends of labor" despite the fact that the union-busting MTA board is led by liberal Democrats like Antonio Villaraigosa, Yvonne Brathwaite-Burke and Gloria Molina. In 2000, transit union leaders promised that in 2003 they would face a more "union-friendly" MTA board. But however much help the Democrats get from unions in getting elected, the Democratic Party is the other party of the capitalist class enemy.

In the course of the class battles to come, a new leadership of the labor movement must come forward based on the understanding that successful working-class struggle requires the independence of the proletariat from the capitalists and their political parties. Out of such struggles will be forged the multiracial revolutionary workers party that is the necessary instrument in leading a proletarian revolution to root out the capitalist profit system and replace it with a socialist egalitarian society.■

March on Washington...

(continued from page 12)

was the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action & Integration. And Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary (BAMN), which organized a contingent of students who marched over from Howard University. Initiated by the tiny, fake-Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers League, the liberal BAMN fits right in with the preachers and black Democrats, as it campaigns for "a new civil rights movement."

Karl Marx remarked that if everything in world history occurred twice, the first was tragedy, the second time farce. If the first March on Washington was a "farce," as radical black nationalist Malcolm X put it, what does that make the latest warmed-over, scaled-down medicine show for the Democratic Party enemies of black freedom? ***Break with the Democrats! For a revolutionary workers party that fights for all the oppressed!***

The Farce on Washington

At its base and in its early years, the mass of black and white activists who were the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement wrote a heroic chapter in the fight for black equality in racist America. Protesting black masses faced vicious police repression and a bloody campaign of KKK terror. Rejecting the pacifism of King & Co., courageous militants like the Deacons for Defense and Justice and Robert F. Williams organized armed self-defense against the Klan and racist cop terror. But from its inception, the civil rights movement was dominated by a black middle-class leadership allied to Democratic Party liberalism, exemplified by King. Their aim was to pressure the Democratic Party administrations of Kennedy and Johnson to grant formal, legal equality to blacks in the South and to keep the struggles within the bounds of the capitalist system.

Even the most conservative civil rights leaders initially saw the March as a means to put the heat on the Kennedy administration, which was dragging its feet on a civil rights bill and other anti-discrimination legislation. But when Kennedy called the "respectable leaders" into the Oval Office for a conference, they quickly dropped even the posture of pressure. The march destination was diverted from the White House to the Lincoln Memorial. They issued a handbook for the march, omitting a planned "statement to the president" and a call to confront Congress. Participation was denied to "subversive" groups and speeches were censored. Although John Lewis (today a Democratic Congressman from Georgia) of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)—which was then breaking to the left of the mainstream civil rights leadership—was invited to speak, he was pressured into deleting from his prepared text the sentence "We cannot depend on any political party for both Democrats and Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence." Disgusted SNCC staffers took to wearing "I Have a Nightmare" buttons.

As Malcolm X described, the original impetus for the march came from the black masses, in the wake of black self-defense efforts against KKK and cop terror in Birmingham, Alabama:

> "It was the grass roots out there in the street. It scared the white man to death, scared the white power structure in Washington, D.C. to death: I was there. When they found out that this black steamroller was going to come down on the capital, they called in [NAACP leader] Wilkins, they called in [head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters] Randolph, they called in these national Negro leaders that you respect and told them, 'Call it off.' Kennedy said, 'Look, you all are letting this thing go too far.' And Old Tom said, 'Boss, I can't stop it, because I didn't start it.'... 'I'm not even in it, much less at the head of it.'... And that old shrewd fox, he said, 'If you all aren't in it, I'll put you in it. I'll put you at the head of it. I'll endorse it. I'll welcome it. I'll help it. I'll join it'."

Malcolm added:

> "They controlled it so tight, they told those Negroes what time to hit town, how to come, where to stop, what signs to carry, what song to sing, what speech they could make, and what speech they couldn't make; and then told them to get out of town by sundown."
>
> —*Malcom X Speaks*
> (Grove Press, 1966)

The bourgeoisie eventually acquiesced to the demand for legal equality in the South, both because Jim Crow segregation had grown anachronistic and because it was an embarrassment overseas as American imperialism sought to posture as the champion of "democracy" in the Cold War, particularly in competition with the Soviet Union in the Third World.

While the civil rights movement challenged white racist America and gave rise to a generation of young radicals, it did not and could not open up a new period of black equality and advancement. For a decaying capitalism cannot meet the promise of black freedom. The civil rights movement came up against this fact harshly when it swept out of the South into the North in the mid 1960s. The hellish conditions of ghetto life—the mass chronic unemployment, racist cop terror, crumbling schools, poverty and hunger—are rooted in American capitalism and can only be eradicated through a thoroughgoing social revolution. What was key then, as now, is the mobilization of the multiracial working class to link the fight for black freedom with the struggle for workers revolution. We fight to mobilize the working class on the program of revolutionary integrationism—the full integration of black people in an egalitarian socialist society in which those who labor rule.

AP

Martin Luther King (second from left) with John F. Kennedy (second from right) in 1963. Liberals sought to divert struggle for black rights into reliance on capitalist government and Democratic Party.

Forty years after the March on Washington, by every material standard, the condition of life for the ghetto masses has worsened: average family income has plunged, schools are more segregated nationwide than before civil rights programs were implemented, and the unemployment rate among black youth is twice that among white youth. The racist "war on drugs," which was heavily promoted by black Democrats like Jackson and Sharpton, has meant an American prison population of over 2 million, 44 percent of whom are black. An astounding *28 percent of all black men* are destined to spend time behind bars.

Cops prowl the ghettos, routinely invading black families' homes and gunning down black youth on the street with impunity. Poverty, chronic joblessness and jail, schools that are no more than holding pens, AIDS, crime and cop terror—these are the standard aspects of life for the black population under decaying American capitalism. It is a measure of the horrendous conditions faced by black people that the Democratic Party and other organizers of the August 23 rally could not mobilize more than a few thousand to "celebrate" the March on Washington.

Even the most minimal remaining gains of the civil rights movement are today on the chopping block. In late June, the Supreme Court upheld the notion of "diversity" in the case of the University of Michigan law school while ruling unconstitutional an affirmative action point system for minority applicants to the undergraduate school. That BAMN and others pointed to this as a major victory for the rights of minorities speaks to the bankruptcy of the reformist and liberal proponents of affirmative action.

It took a social revolution to free blacks from the chains of slavery. And it will take a workers revolution to at last free black Americans and all working people from the shackles of capitalism. This is the task to which the Spartacist League is dedicated. Finish the Civil War! Black liberation through socialist revolution!■

Chile...

(continued from page 3)

negative—the basic Marxist understanding that the capitalist state at its core is a repressive apparatus composed of the cops, the courts, the military and the prison system which serves to defend private property and the class rule of the bourgeoisie. The working class cannot simply seize control of this repressive capitalist state and wield it for its own very different purposes—the bourgeois state must be smashed through workers revolution and replaced by organs of workers rule.

Despite the transition to "parliamentary democracy" in 1990, Pinochet only retired as head of the military in 1998, and workers strikes and protests continue to be met with brutal repression. In August, a one-day general strike by some 640,000 workers against "30 years of economic dictatorship" was met by riot police shooting water cannons, and over 200 demonstrators were arrested, some of whom have been charged under new "anti-terror" laws. Women are still subjected to particularly savage oppression: abortion is outlawed in all circumstances, even to save a woman's life, and divorce is illegal.

In "Workers, Leftists Face Massacre in Chile," (*WV* No. 29, 28 September 1973), we wrote: "Either the lessons of this tragic defeat will be learned by the labor movement or we shall pay the price of our blindness in blood." The same program of class collaboration that produced this defeat is still promoted today by pseudo-socialists around the world. An authentically Bolshevik—i.e., Trotskyist—vanguard party of the proletariat must be forged that fights for the complete political independence of the proletariat from the capitalists, the necessary condition for victorious revolutionary struggle.■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

40 Years After March on Washington

AP photos

Birmingham, 1963: Struggles for equality galvanized black America. Forty years later, racist cop terror and segregation are daily reality in capitalist America.

USA Still Racist Hell for Black People

Break with the Democrats!

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Forty years ago one of America's great truth tellers, Malcolm X, denounced the 1963 March on Washington as the "farce on Washington." Hailed as the high-water mark of the mass civil rights movement, the march was in fact its nadir, marking its subordination to the Democratic Party of the Kennedys and Lyndon Johnson who, like the racist capitalist class they served, had nothing but contempt for black people's struggles for equality.

Four decades after Martin Luther King Jr. proclaimed, "I have a dream," America remains a racist hellhole for the mass of black people. And thanks to the treacherous role of King and his political heirs, the racist trade-union misleaders, and sundry "left" organizations who tail after them, blacks remain overwhelmingly chained to the very same Democrats who have repeatedly stomped on their aspirations—from Jimmy Carter who spat on school busing to desegregate public schools by adopting the segregationist call for "ethnic purity" to Bill Clinton who eliminated "welfare as we know it," condemning countless black mothers and their families to starvation and homelessness, while vastly expanding use of the racist death penalty.

Last month some 5,000 people turned out to commemorate the 1963 march. Called by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the commemoration was an electoral rally for the Democrats, pure and simple. Organizers talked of a "rolling mobilization" of activities leading up to the 2004 presidential elections. Martin Luther King III declared, "We are here to create a revolution at the ballot box" (*Amsterdam News*, 28 August). Former D.C. delegate Rev. Walter Fauntroy described the rally as the kickoff of a 15-month voter registration drive and declared, "We want to give Martin Luther King a birthday present next year at the polls" (*Washington Post*, 24 August).

This Democratic Party revival meeting was supported by a variety of organizations who purport to be socialists. The Workers World Party lauded the march for its "strong anti-war mood," while uncritically noting that "among the speakers were three presidential candidates—the Rev. Al Sharpton, Carol Mosely Braun and Howard Dean" as well as Democratic Party spokesman Jesse Jackson (*Workers World*, 4 September).

Heavily involved in building the event

continued on page 11

Victory to Yale Strikers!

On August 27, Yale University unions representing over 4,000 campus and hospital workers went out on strike against the vicious Ivy League bosses of this bastion of racist class privilege. Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE) Local 34, representing clerical and technical workers, and Local 35, representing service and maintenance workers, had been working without a contract for over 18 months when they struck on the eve of the fall session. They are joined in their strike by some 160 dietary workers organized by Service Employees International Union District 1199 at Yale-New Haven Hospital, who have been without a contract for three years and have been the vanguard of a bitter fight to unionize another 1,800 workers at the hospital.

Young Spartacus

Among the strike's most committed student supporters are activists of the Graduate Employees and Students Organization (GESO), who have been battling the union-busting Yale administration for almost 15 years to win the right for teaching and research assistants to form a union. GESO and 1199's struggles underscore that this strike battle poses not only the fight for decent wages, pensions and job security for Local 34, 35 and 1199 members, but the fight to organize all campus and hospital workers into unions. And it is widely recognized that if Yale succeeds in its attempts to crush the strike and bust the unions, then other universities across the country will follow suit.

Young Spartacus

September 4: Hundreds-strong picket and rally of striking campus workers and student supporters at Yale, New Haven, Connecticut.

Yale exemplifies the capitalist rulers' contempt for working people and the oppressed. With an $11 billion endowment managed by a rogues' gallery of powerful capitalists, this elite private university lords it over the predominantly black and minority residents of impoverished New Haven. Yale accounts for almost one in four jobs in a city with a per capita income of less than $17,000. While Yale boasts on its Web site of the massive returns on the investments it has made in the last few years, it is offering the paltriest wage increases on average incomes of $33,000 a year for clerical workers and $30,000 for other campus workers. The average tuition, room and board at Yale for a year is higher than what these workers get paid! With a pension fund surplus of $200 million, Yale is still balking at

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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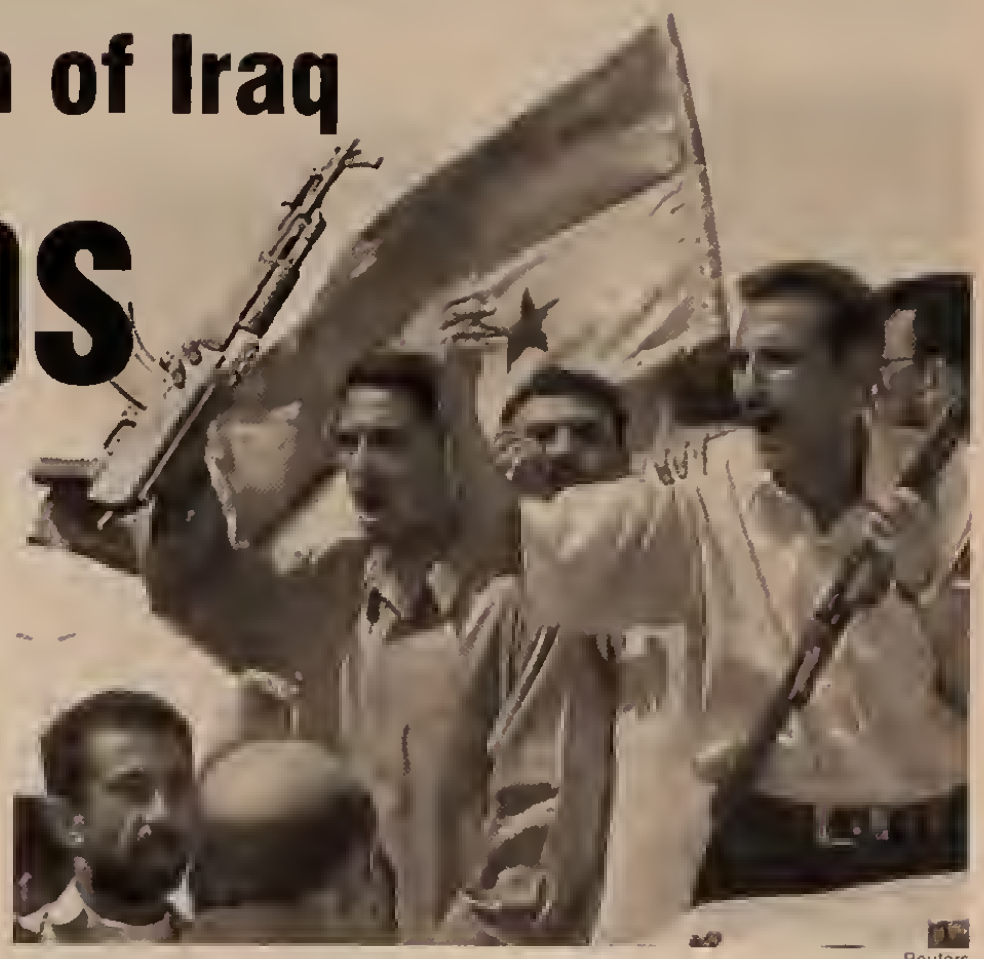
No. 810 | 26 September 2003

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!

Imperialist Occupation of Iraq

U.S. Troops Out Now!



Reuters

Falluja, September 13: Iraqi protesters chant anti-American slogans at funeral for eight police officers shot by U.S. troops.

We print below a presentation, edited and abridged for publication, by comrade Don Cane at a September 13 Spartacist League forum in San Francisco.

The International Communist League opposes the U.S. imperialist occupation of Iraq. As the American section, the Spartacist League/U.S., we recognize the Iraqi people and the American working class have a common enemy—the American capitalist ruling class. Every victory for the imperialists encourages yet more military adventures: every setback assists the struggles of working people and the oppressed. What force can act against this lone superpower? We need class struggle in the imperialist centers as the chief means to act for the defense of Iraq. As we said from the beginning of the buildup to the U.S. invasion of Iraq: Every strike, every labor mobilization against war plans, every mass protest against attacks on workers and minorities, every struggle against domestic repression weakens the imperialist war drive.

Our struggle takes place within the "New World Order" emerging from the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. This counterrevolution, which restored the capitalist profit system, was a huge defeat for the world's working class. The 1917 Bolshevik-led October Revolution, the world's first and only victorious workers revolution, seized power for the working class. It was a beacon of hope for the millions of oppressed and exploited, particularly in the colonial East. Bolshevism meant resolute anti-imperialism. What we need is that kind of a revolution —not a few reforms, or a new deal with the capitalist government. The whole bastion of private property has got to go, along with the state powers that prop it up.

The Wall Street bankers and the oil cartels, the generals and colonels—we must sweep them away into the dustbin of history!

The mullahs and priests, the sheiks and landlords—we must sweep them away into the dustbin of history!

The kings and the would-be nationalist overlords, the U.S. Congress and the imperial presidency—we must sweep them away into the dustbin of history!

In the U.S.-led imperialist assault on Iraq, the International Communist League clearly took a side. On March 19, the SL/U.S. issued a statement demanding "Defend Iraq Against U.S./British Attack! Down With U.S. Imperialism! All U.S. and Allied Troops Out of the Near East Now!" (*WV* No. 800, 28 March). We said:

> "This is nothing but a colonial war of naked imperialist aggression to be followed by a colonial occupation of this oil-rich Near Eastern country. The U.S. rulers prattle about bringing 'democracy' and 'liberation' to the Iraqi people—like the Zionists 'liberated' the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. The gruesome devastation planned for Iraq is the true face of U.S. imperialism—wading in blood and dripping with filth, a roaring beast devastating culture and humanity."

We stood for the military defense of Iraq without giving an ounce of political support to the Saddam Hussein regime. Hussein was a bloody oppressor of Iraqi workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims and the Kurdish people. His Ba'ath Party regime,

continued on page 4

Defend the Palestinian People!

Israel Hands Off Arafat!

When Israeli vice prime minister Ehud Olmert bellowed, "Arafat can no longer be a factor in what happens here.... Expulsion is certainly one of the options, and killing is also one of the options," the full intent of this threat was clear: the Zionist regime was announcing to the world that they were ready for a mass slaughter of Palestinians that would far overshadow the April 2002 bloodbath in Jenin. To punctuate the message, Israeli warplanes buzzed ominously over the ruined remains of Arafat's Ramallah compound, where he has been held under siege for nearly two years. Despite our political opposition to Arafat and Arab nationalism, we revolutionary Trotskyists add our voice to the worldwide outcry against Zionist state terrorism: ***Hands off Arafat! Defend the Palestinian people!***

The threat to "liquidate" Arafat is only the most recent provocation in the Zionist state's long history of ***assassination as policy***. Such "targeted killings" of Palestinian activists have been carried out under both Likud and Labor governments, sharply escalating over the past three years. Likud prime minister Ariel Sharon has openly expressed regret he didn't take out Arafat 21 years ago in Beirut, when Sharon commanded the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and presided over the slaughter of some two thousand Palestinian men, women and children in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. Last month, Israel assassinated a key political leader of the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas, following this with an attempt on Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the group's spiritual leader, seeking to provoke Hamas' many supporters into a bloody confrontation. Now the Israelis are openly threatening to assassinate the elected president of the Palestinian Authority and icon of the Palestinian struggle for national liberation.

Murderous terror and expulsion have been the program of the Zionist state since 1948, when some 700,000 Palestinians were driven from their homes. Over the past three years, in addition to the "targeted killings" there have been other killings of some 2,600 Palestinians, including nearly 500 children and 180 women. Thousands more have been imprisoned or rounded up in military dragnets. In April, Israeli troops loaded up to 3,000 men and boys in the West

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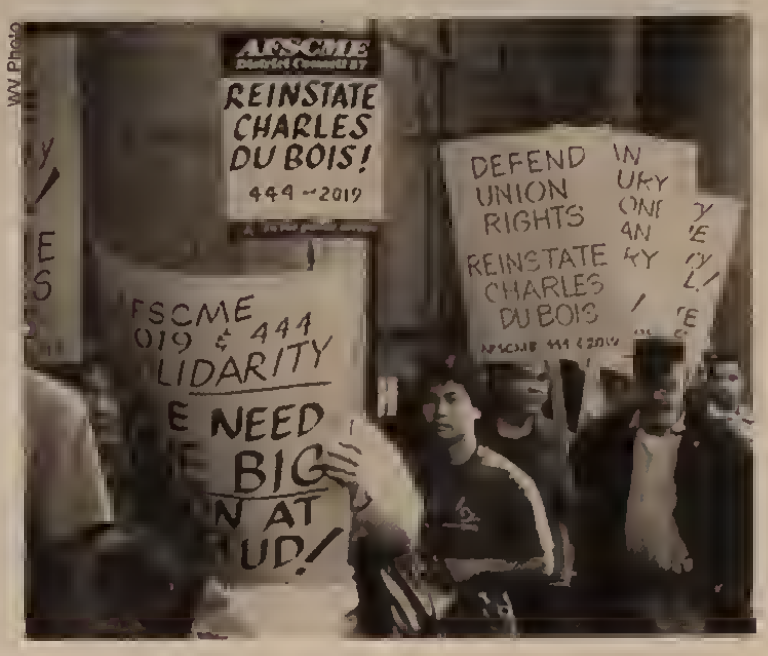
AFSCME Union Rally Demands: Rehire Charles DuBois!

Oakland—East Bay MUD

OAKLAND—More than 100 union members and supporters—immigrant, Latino, black, white—came out on September 17 in a spirited rally to defend fired black union militant Charles DuBois, as part of the continuing fight for his reinstatement. AFSCME Locals 2019 and 444, representing some 1,400 workers at the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) who provide water and sewage services, called the rally at EBMUD's Oakland headquarters under the slogans: "Defend Union Rights! An Injury to One Is an Injury to All! Reinstate Charles DuBois!" Members of a half-dozen other local unions joined, and AC Transit bus drivers and passing motorists honked their support. Judy Goff, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alameda County Central Labor Council (CLC), brought solidarity greetings from the 126,600-strong federation.

Throughout his 18 years at EBMUD, meter reader DuBois has been an active member of Local 444, serving terms as a shop steward and executive board member, and has fought for the unions to take up the fight against all forms of oppression. Company bosses fired him in early July following a years-long campaign of harassment and bogus charges. Workers who attended the rally from every section of the District—janitors, meter readers, maintenance, pipe repair, water inspectors, water conservation, clerks, sewage treatment, engineers—came out to assert the unions' determination to defend DuBois, fired EBMUD workers Kathy Greig and Robert Mena, and all their members.

A "Call to Action" written by AFSCME union members in defense of DuBois began: "The District has once again used workplace violence policies to target and terminate an individual who is a thorn in the side of District management." An article in the June issue of Local 444's newsletter *Mainline* made available by rally organizers described how DuBois had been suspended last March under such policies: "...you can now be disciplined for telling a management official that 'I'm going to file a grievance so hard about this and you'll deserve it' (the offending words cited by management itself)." Black workers are a special target for this kind of treatment, as employers seek to use racism to divide the workers.



WV Photo

Oakland, September 17: Rally in defense of Charles DuBois called by AFSCME Locals 2019 and 444 in front of headquarters of East Bay Municipal Utility District.

Rally participants cheered when Randy Kim, a 23-year Local 444 member fired in 1998 in a similar "workplace violence" frame-up despite a defense campaign by both locals, took the megaphone. (For brother Kim's story, see "'Workplace Violence' Witchhunt Targets Unions, Minorities," *WV* No. 695, 28 August 1998.) The protesters chanted: "Workplace violence is a management attack—Bring DuBois back!" Gregg Best, the author of the *Mainline* article and an organizer of the rally, told the crowd: "'Workplace violence' witchhunts are also being used as part of the so-called 'war on terror' which in fact targets labor, blacks and immigrants—a *bipartisan* war backed by both Democrats and Republicans. National unity is a lie!" During the invasion of Iraq, the *San Francisco Chronicle* fired columnist Henry Norr for attending an antiwar demonstration. Last April 7, Oakland cops opened fire with "less lethal" weapons on antiwar protesters and longshoremen at the Port of Oakland.

Several signs at the rally called for the two locals to join in one union at EBMUD. Emboldened by the general anti-labor climate, EBMUD had gone after concessions in contract negotiations earlier this year and succeeded in pitting one union local against another. Union members told *WV* that many workers felt demoralized in the outcome, and the company was pushing its advantage. The existence of separate unions is a big gift to the employers. There should be one union at EBMUD, joining together not only the AFSCME locals but the smaller Operating Engineers Local 39, while excluding management (currently organized in a bosses' "union," IFPTE Local 21).

The rally flyer reported that "At one location, District management arrogantly told workers: 'Your union is so weak it should be on suicide watch'." Local 2019 president Jay Morgan told the rally that "water conservation representatives were disciplined for exercising their free speech rights, for questioning supervisors, for wondering about workloads" at a staff meeting. Many workers saw this joint union rally as a chance to let management know the unions would fight back, seeing the firing of DuBois as an attempt to intimidate all union workers.

The entire crew of janitors at the EBMUD building, mainly immigrant women, came out to picket right in front of their bosses to defend DuBois because he fought for them when he was a union

continued on page 11

TROTSKY

Democrats and Republicans—Parties of Capital

LENIN

The labor bureaucracy's support to the Democratic Party "friends of labor" is a key obstacle to advancing the struggles of the working class in the U.S. In a speech announcing his presidential campaign in 1904, Socialist leader Eugene V. Debs stressed that the Democrats and Republicans are both parties of the capitalist exploiters. The chief task is to forge a workers party committed to sweeping away the whole capitalist order through socialist revolution.

The Republican and Democratic parties, or, to be more exact, the Republican-Democratic Party, represent the capitalist class in the class struggle. They are the political wings of the capitalist system and such differences as arise between them relate to spoils and not to principles.

With either of these parties in power one thing is always certain and that is that the capitalist class is in the saddle and the working class under the saddle.

Under the administration of both these parties the means of production are private property, production is carried forward for capitalist profit purely, markets are glutted and industry paralyzed, workingmen become tramps and criminals while injunctions, soldiers and riot guns are brought into action to preserve "law and order" in the chaotic carnival of capitalistic anarchy.

Deny it as may the cunning capitalists who are clear-sighted enough to perceive it, or ignore it as may the torpid workers who are too blind and unthinking to see it, the struggle in which we are engaged today is a class struggle, and as the toiling millions come to see and understand it and rally to the political standard of their class, they will drive all capitalist parties of whatever name into the same party, and the class struggle will then be so clearly revealed that the hosts of labor will find their true place in the conflict and strike the united and decisive blow that will destroy slavery and achieve their full and final emancipation.

—Eugene V. Debs, "The Socialist Party and the Working Class," *Writings and Speeches of Eugene V. Debs* (1948)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 810 **26 September 2003**

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Young Spartacus

—Zionist Censors Unleashed at Rutgers—

Break the Ban on Palestine Conference!

In an outrageous act of political censorship, the Rutgers University administration has banned the Third North American Conference of the Palestine Solidarity Movement (PSM), scheduled for October 10-12 on the New Brunswick, New Jersey campus. We protest this ban, and stand in solidarity with the student organizers, who have vowed: "We refuse to be silenced. We will hold our conference wherever we must." The campus president of New Jersey Solidarity-Activists for the Liberation of Palestine, Paola Rizzuto, pointed out in the group's 12 September statement, "This is political repression—just as the Palestinian people have been repressed through history." To ban this conference is to say that defense of the Palestinian people is out of the range of "free speech" and to legitimize the claim that Palestinian equals terrorist. The crusade to silence opponents of Zionist terror, including the murder of solidarity activists in the Occupied Territories, goes hand in hand with the escalation of murderous repression against the Palestinians themselves.

For almost as long as the conference has been planned for Rutgers, Zionist groups have plotted to crush it. Last year, the Zionists mobilized over 1,000 students from as far away as New York to protest the second PSM conference, hosted in Ann Arbor, Michigan. This year the Zionists expect 5,000 in a rally to kick off their "Israel Inspires" counter-conference scheduled for the exact same weekend as the Palestine conference.

Those taking aim against the PSM conference extend to far higher places than campus Zionist groups. The university president has "pledged his support for Israel Inspires," according to the counter-conference Web site. He has joined with the New Jersey governor in calling the PSM conference "reprehensible," while the co-president of the New Jersey State Senate called it "abominable."

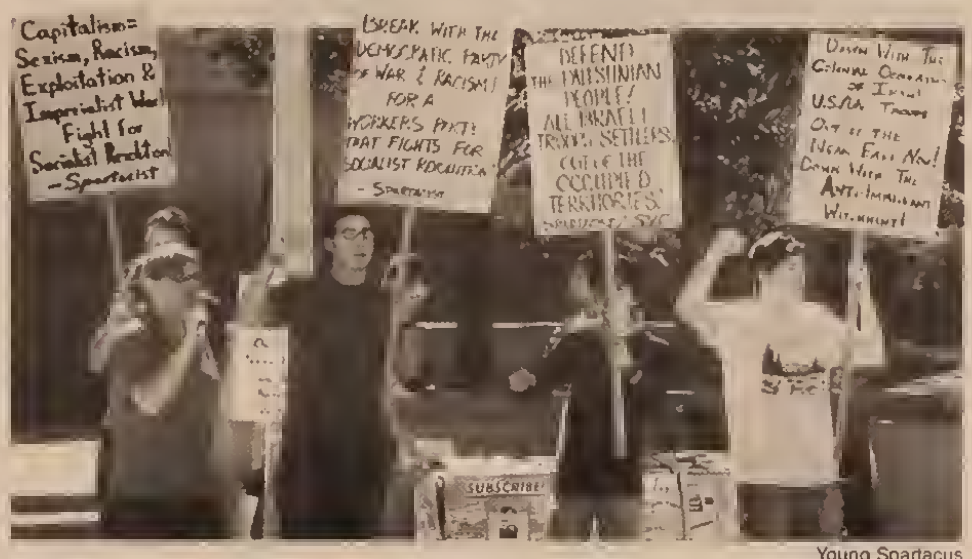
The only thing the Zionist state can "inspire" is cruelty, sadism and genocide. The Israeli rulers relentlessly close in on the desperate Palestinians, sealed off behind concrete ghetto walls, their homes bulldozed, the sky over their heads ruled by helicopters raining death. It's no accident that now, as Israeli officials shamelessly, openly discuss killing Yasir Arafat, the Rutgers administration decided to just shut down the student Palestinian conference. From the Students for Justice in Palestine group that was temporarily suspended at UC Berkeley to Rutgers, campus groups nationwide are being targeted to be shut down.

The sinister "Israel Inspires" counter-conference is an overt platform for murderous state terror: speakers include the publisher of the *Jerusalem Post*, which called for murdering Arafat. Other invited speakers are the big guns for the American imperialist invasion of Iraq and takeover of the Near East: neocons James Woolsey (former CIA director) and Richard Perle, the former assistant secretary of defense for international security policy dubbed "the Prince of Darkness" during the Reagan years, today a close adviser to Donald Rumsfeld. Why are such major "America *über alles*" pro-Zionist warmongers (and war profiteers) being brought out to counter this student gathering? Clearly, they're not concerned with petty bureaucratic rules on "deadlines" and administrative procedures on the Rutgers campus (the ostensible reasons for banning the pro-Palestine conference). In fact, they represent the state itself taking a firm stance against all defense of Palestinians, right down to the campus level.

As part of this campaign, on September 18 Israeli cabinet member Natan Sharansky spoke at Rutgers (getting a pie in his face from Abe Greenhouse of Central New Jersey Jews Against the Occupation). Sharansky, who later emigrated to Israel, was first made famous as a pro-imperialist dissident in the USSR. As we pointed out at the time: "Shcharansky is *guilty* of a crime against the world proletariat—transmitting military secrets of the USSR, a degenerated workers state, to the imperialists" ("Shcharansky Is Guilty as Hell!", *WV* No. 212, 28 July 1978). Today Sharansky is infamous as a Zionist former "Minister of Housing" who presided over paramilitary "settler" invasions of Palestinian land and bulldozing of Palestinian homes.

We Marxists are intransigent defenders of the Palestinians against the Zionist state. At the same time, we oppose *all* variants of Islamic fundamentalism and nationalism, from ultra-reactionary Hamas-style terrorism against innocent Israeli civilians to the PLO's pathetic appeals to the UN and capitalist Arab regimes, who themselves oppress the Palestinians. We counterpose to this *proletarian* revolutionary internationalism. The road to the liberation of the Palestinian people lies through common class struggle by the Hebrew-speaking and Arab workers against the ruling classes of the Near East. We are for a socialist federation of the Near East, the only way that the right of national self-determination for both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples can be realized.

Those who speak out in defense of the Palestinians have been targeted by U.S. officials and rabidly Zionist groups like the nefarious Anti-Defamation League, which just gave Italian leader Silvio "Mussolini did not murder anyone" Berlusconi its Distinguished Statesman Award! This campaign against supporters of the Palestinians is part of the U.S. state's attempt to stifle dissent domestically. The racist anti-immigrant dragnet immediately after September 11 grabbed over 1,200 immigrants, mainly of Arab background, and held them in punitive detention. Lately, pro-Palestinian activists such as Faruk Abdel-Muhti have been arrested and Palestinians deported. We forthrightly defend them and call to *drop all charges against the pro-Palestinian activists! No deportations!* We call for dropping all the charges against those targeted by the racist INS dragnet. It is in the interests of all students, faculty and campus workers at Rutgers, and elsewhere, to protest this ban, which if successful will further embolden the forces of repression. We say: Break the ban on the Rutgers Palestine conference! Defend the Palestinians! Down with the U.S. imperialist and Zionist "war on terror" on campus!■



Young Spartacus

University of Illinois at Chicago: SYC raises slogan "Defend the Palestinian People!" at September 16 speakout against anti-immigrant witchhunt in U.S. and colonial occupation of Iraq.

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At Large	250	238	95%
National Total	**3,100**	**1,709½**	**55%**

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Troops Out!...

(continued from page 1)

put in power with the aid of the U.S., defended the existing social relations in Iraq based on tribal and religious privilege extending back to the days of the Ottoman Empire. Today the American imperialists offer a sham democracy as an alternative to the Hussein regime to better mask their rape of Iraq.

"Peace Patriots" and Opportunist "Socialists"

During the period of the recent antiwar protests, the ICL intervened around the world, including with revolutionary internationalist contingents—marching in opposition to the U.S. war and counterposed to the social-patriotic programs of the protest leaderships. These social-patriotic programs consisted of a mixture of liberal pacifism and appeals to patriotism—"peace is patriotic" being a prominent slogan. These "peace patriots" opposed the war not from the standpoint of defending Iraq—a weak, semicolonial country—from a predatory attack by the U.S., an imperial power, but of safeguarding the best interests of the predator, U.S. imperialism. The best example of this attempt to "safeguard" was the appeals for United Nations approval and cover for the attack—"Don't go alone," they said, "it's too dangerous." This is like telling the alpha wolf, "Yes, your prey is wounded and ready to finish off, but the situation is dangerous, it still can bite. For your own safety wait for the rest of the pack to finish the job even if you are the leader."

The current spectacle of the lesser great powers—France, Germany, Russia—that led UN "opposition" to the war now demanding their place at the trough of Iraqi oil and "reconstruction" is obscene. Remarking on the great power alliance that sought to militarily crush the young Soviet republic, Lenin observed in an October 1920 speech, "Property divides whereas labour unites. Private property is robbery, and a state based on private property is a state of robbers, who are fighting for a share of the spoils. Though they have not yet finished this war, they are already fighting among themselves." The lesson here is that no imperialist alliance—UN, NATO, European Union, etc.—can stay united because they "are bound by no genuine or permanent interests." Only the international working class is capable of united action based on common interest. The Bush administration is now beginning to heed the warnings of danger and trying to get the UN wolf pack to help it devour Iraq. Only the international working class has the interest and the power to disperse this pack in defense of Iraq.

Between our revolutionary internationalist position and the "peace patriots" stood assorted so-called socialists. Nearer to the peace patriots were the reformist socialist organizations, the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the Workers World Party (WWP) and the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), that in fact organized and led the assorted antiwar coalitions—ANSWER (WWP), Not In Our Name (RCP) and the various campus networks (ISO). Posturing more to the left were smaller groups like the League for the Revolutionary Party, which talked of defense of Iraq and voiced opposition to U.S. imperialism but joined with the reformists in promoting the class-collaborationist antiwar movement.

But the most important political force is the bureaucratic leadership of the AFL-CIO trade-union federation with its ties to the Democratic Party, a not-so-liberal capitalist party. It is in that party that America's chosen black leadership comes into power and influence. It is here, through the Democratic Party, that the multiracial American working class, in particular the oppressed black masses, are chained to the war chariot of their own racist oppressors and exploiters.

We must examine concretely the politics of all these forces both in the context of recent struggle and not too distant history. We must also examine the question of war and its related issues such as national oppression, women's oppression and the class struggle concretely. This is the only way to choose a side to stand with. I want to convince you to choose the side of revolutionary internationalism.

Trotskyists Hailed Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan

The history of the Near East shows over and over again the bankruptcy of the bourgeois road of deals with the imperialists and relying on the so-called "progressive" Arab nationalist bourgeoisie to break the chains of imperialism. The idea that the working class and the oppressed can move forward by pressuring the rulers to make reforms, or by joining with them in administering their state, has led to one bloody defeat after another. To overturn this system means a sharp break from such illusions in conciliation of imperialist and nationalist forces, from reliance on that den of thieves, the United Nations. We must forge revolutionary parties committed to the principles of proletarian internationalism and a Socialist Federation of the Near East; parties that fight for national equality and for women's liberation as a motor force for revolutionary struggle. The imperialists and bourgeois nationalists are utterly hostile to women's emancipation and the equal rights of all oppressed nations and national minorities, which can only be achieved through a thoroughgoing socialist revolution that shatters capitalist property relations and all associated social institutions.

Imperialism has sought to drown in blood every movement for emancipation from the centuries-old chains of tradition and the exploitation of the landlords and the capitalists. In this aim, institutionalized religion has been one of their main tools and the rights of women one of the main casualties.

While there are many examples of this, probably the most glaring is Afghanistan. In the late 1970s a civil war between the Soviet-allied modernizing Kabul regime and the tribal *mujahedin* broke out. In dispute was the government's move to introduce a few rather minor reforms—like reducing the bride price, not even abolishing it. To protect its borders from the rightist threat, in late 1979 the Soviet Union sent in the Red Army to defend Kabul, following repeated requests by the Afghan government. The Red Army's presence was defending the rights of the women of Afghanistan. Its opponents, the *mujahedin*, were shooting schoolteachers for teaching girls how to read and throwing acid in the faces of unveiled women. And on *their* side was—the United States, arming and funding them in what was at that time the largest CIA operation in history.

We said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and called on the Soviets to extend the gains of October to the peoples of Afghanistan. What were those gains? Just across the border, Central Asia had once been exactly like Afghanistan—a miserably backward, desolate and benighted place. But in the 1920s Soviet power came to Central Asia. In 50 years, Soviet Central Asia had moved forward ten centuries, because it had been transformed from a backward, tribal area by a socialized planned economy.

The old Soviet Union was undermined by decades of Stalinist misrule and sold out to Western imperialism. But the 75-year experience of a planned economy and how the Russian workers took power will not be forgotten. The party of Lenin and Trotsky, the Bolsheviks, finds expression today in the International Communist League. We fight today for new October Revolutions based on precious lessons learned from it. Our opponents on the left and within the workers movement work equally as hard against new October Revolutions based on their belief that it was a "failed experiment." But societies, with the wars and revolutions—the class struggles—that shape them, are not cooked up in a laboratory but fashioned by the human hand guided by the human mind and need.

Labor Must Oppose Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!

There is a wide chasm between our proletarian, revolutionary, internationalist program and the abjectly reformist/liberal politics of the rest of the left in the U.S. However, in times of heightened social struggle these organizations can and will posture to the left. The fight to transform the working class from a class in itself, the object of capitalist exploitation, to a class for itself, conscious of its revolutionary purpose as the agency for the eradication of the capitalist order, requires battling the false consciousness which ties the workers and oppressed to their own rulers. Within the workers movement, it is not only the trade-union bureaucracy that serves to reinforce the rule of capital but also the reformist and centrist pretenders to Marxism.

WV Photo

Los Angeles, March 30: Workers World Party's ANSWER coalition promotes pro-imperialist lie that American occupation forces are "our troops."

We often make the point that the AFL-CIO officialdom views the world through the same lens as the capitalist rulers. This is not simply ideological, but has its roots in the fact that for these labor tops to retain their privileged position atop the labor movement, they not only need the maintenance of capitalism but also benefit from the dominance of their own imperialist bourgeoisie. They are aptly described as "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class."

The AFL-CIO tops don't give a damn about the Third World poor, and turn their back on sweatshop workers in the U.S. as well. The labor bureaucracy acts as the capitalists' political police inside the working class, including by championing American imperialist war efforts from Korea and Vietnam to Iraq. But the politics of class struggle is in fact a struggle. The wave of patriotism ignited by the criminal attack on the World Trade Center is receding amid the increasing real miseries and wholesale attacks on democratic rights that confront the American population. At least 42 union locals, 14 district or union regional councils and four national unions issued some statement of opposition to the war on Iraq. These resolutions were a reflection of growing discontent among workers with the venal Bush administration, which showers billions in tax cuts and contracts on its cronies while workers face job cuts and attacks on their pensions and medical benefits. This discontent has only deepened as the true cost of the bloody occupation of Iraq becomes evident.

Recently the chairman of the New York Stock Exchange, under scrutiny for a $139.5 million pay package, stated that he felt "blessed" to receive such pay. Indeed, many of his class brethren may not be as blessed, but still manage to steal more in profits in one week than the average worker sweats to earn in a year. Labor productivity, an indication of the level of exploitation within the American economy, has climbed nearly 6 percent while steady job losses have led to unemployment figures over 6 percent. Fewer workers are working harder to produce more goods and services. Here is an indicator of the living conditions of the average American worker: HUD (the Department of Housing and Urban Development) places the average "housing wage" (what a worker needs to earn to maintain housing) last year at $15.21, about $2 less than the average hourly pay. This leaves the worker $2 for all other needs. Capitalism blesses the capitalists and damns the workers.

Many of the union antiwar resolutions simply opposed unilateral U.S. action and placed their opposition within the framework of American bourgeois democracy. They called for a UN cover. They reflect the politics of the more liberal wing of the capitalist Democratic Party. The aim is not to mobilize labor's social power in concrete acts of class struggle against U.S. imperialism, such as political protest strikes against the war and the occupation. Their aim is to organize labor as one more constituent of a pro-Democratic Party "peace movement."

Workers must be brought to understand that they share no interests with their capitalist bosses; that imperialist war is simply the extension of capitalism's quest for the profits that are solely obtained by the exploitation of labor; that for the imperialists guns *are* butter; that the UN operates solely to perpetuate and enforce world domination by the major imperialist powers. Leading up to and during the war on Iraq, Scottish railroad workers and Italian metal workers showed the way forward for the international working class by engaging in concrete acts of class struggle against the war. On the West Coast, we witnessed a cop assault—the firing of blast grenades and wooden bullets, on an antiwar protest at the Oakland docks on April 7. Longshoremen who honored this peaceful picket line were also fired upon and arrested. With their union's very existence under the gun of the capitalist state—witnessed by the coastwide employer lockout, Bush's invoking the Taft-Hartley Act and the passing of the Maritime Security Act—the longshoremen did not actively engage in this picket line. But their sympathies were clearly with the protesters.

On February 9, 2002 those same longshoremen were the core of a united-front labor/black demonstration based on the demands: Anti-Terrorist Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks, Labor—No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act! Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt! The rally, initiated by the Spartacist League's fraternal organizations, the Labor/Black League for Social Defense and the Partisan Defense Committee, aimed to mobilize the multiracial working class against the capitalist state's drive to legitimize its violence with "terrorist enemy within" demagogy. We succeeded on a modest scale in driving a wedge into the cracks of the "national unity" barrage. This was the work of a revolutionary workers party in action.

Black Democrats Front for Racist Imperialism

The key to class struggle in the U.S. is black workers within the organized labor movement. The trade unions are the principal and most powerful organizations of the politically backward American workers. The black trade unionist will play a leading role in bringing the social power of these organizations to bear on behalf of all the oppressed. This is our call for the American revolution: Unleash labor/black power! It's time to finish the

Civil War! Forward to a workers state!

American blacks constitute an oppressed race/color caste segregated at the bottom of American capitalist society. From the days of slavery to the present they have been a key component of the labor that has produced the profits of the fat American capitalist class. But in the economic ordering of things black labor has been ghettoized and white racism used as a tool to divide the American workers. The American Dream and the melting pot have always been an American nightmare and fire for black people. Our program of revolutionary integrationism means simply this: the promise of racial equality will only be achieved with an egalitarian socialist America based on a planned economy producing for human need and not profit. Those layers of the working class long oppressed at the bottom will rise to lead the fight for this workers America. This Civil War story gives meaning to this: A newly freed slave in the Union Army encounters his old master looking on in fright as his unit marches by. The former slave soldier shouts to his old master, "Bottom rail on top now, massa." We will say the same to the masters of Wall Street who foment racism and race terror to keep black people in their place as an oppressed race/color caste.

The black Democratic Party mouthpieces, such as Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson, embrace the armed forces of American imperialism as "our troops." But the capitalist rulers spit on the black and working-class ranks of the military, who are just so much cannon fodder to kill and be killed in the interest of Wall Street. Support for the war on Iraq among blacks ran some 30 percent lower than among whites. The reasons are obvious: blacks make up 12 percent of the American population but 21 percent of military personnel and 30 percent of Army enlistees—we can also add, 44 percent of the prison population. Rich man's war, poor man's fight is the theme of these figures. The capitalist rulers can barely conceal their racist contempt—witness their fumbled attempt to slash the $250 a month family bonus pay for combat troops.

Across the political spectrum, from the black Democratic Party hacks to the reformist socialist left, the slogan "support our troops" is a loyalty pledge to American imperialist interests. The international working class must militarily defend those Iraqi forces fighting the U.S. colonial-type occupation of their country. The U.S. government is not "our" government and neither is its army "our" army. This is not to say that the American ruling class does not have a problem with the current composition and morale of its armed forces despite their voluntary character. Many working-class and impoverished youths enlist in the armed forces mainly for economic opportunities and advancement rather than out of gung-ho patriotism. Thus we now see U.S. soldiers in Iraq publicly complaining that their tour of duty has been extended. Such disaffection among lower-class youth sent abroad to kill and risk their own lives for the interests of Wall Street banks and corporate America is a weakness for U.S. imperialist militarism. We say: Not one dime, not one man for the imperialist war machine!

"Left" Tails of the Democrats

If the trade-union bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO can be called "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class" within the workers movement, then the reformist and centrist socialists can be called the NCOs—the non-commissioned officers—of the capitalist class within the workers movement. Anyone who knows about military hierarchy knows that when the times get rough and the troops need to get moving or be kept in line it is the NCOs—the sergeants and corporals—who get the job done. Perhaps one day the capitalist might reward the NCO with promotion for work well done. Now I will address the politics and roles of some of these NCOs.

Within the antiwar protests, the League

WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at NYC antiwar protest, March 22.

for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) whined that it wanted a real united front that includes "revolutionaries—not just those who support the Democrats and other pro-imperialist liberals" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Fall 2002). Here they seek a common movement and a common program against imperialist war with representatives of the very capitalist class in whose interest such wars are waged. But the LRP's "anti-imperialism" is even more fraudulent given their anti-Soviet credentials: howling with the rest of the pack in opposition to the Soviet military intervention against the CIA-backed woman-hating Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan in the 1980s and standing with the counterrevolutionaries who destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92.

There is another anti-Soviet outfit that is probably more familiar to you than the LRP—the International Socialist Organization. The ISO is a good candidate for the title of "State Department socialists." If they have not achieved this job yet it is only because the U.S. State Department has no current need of them. But their résumé for the job is impressive. They embraced the Afghan *mujahedin* hailed by Reagan as "freedom fighters" and cheered the downfall of the Soviet Union. They have supported counterrevolutionary mobs in Havana, Cuba as pro-democracy demonstrations. Their political tendency was born in flight from the defense of the North Korean deformed workers state during the 1950s U.S./UN-led imperialist war effort on the Korean peninsula. They have echoed the "human rights" hypocrisy of the imperialists against the People's Republic of China.

For the imperialists, "human rights" is the right of the human capitalists to exploit humanity's labor and markets—Asia, centered on China, is the most prized target.

The Bush gang has made it clear that after the takeover of Iraq its next target will be North Korea. Standing behind North Korea, geographically and politically, is China, by far the most powerful of the remaining states where capitalism has been overthrown (the others being North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba). Having succeeded in their goal of destroying the Soviet Union, the American imperialists view the continued existence of the People's Republic of China as a very large piece of unfinished business. Their goal: to reverse the 1949 Chinese Revolution in order to subjugate and exploit China. Their strategy: to combine external military pressure with internal capitalist penetration facilitated by the "market reforms" of the venal Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy.

The ICL stands for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese and North Korean bureaucratically deformed workers states against imperialist attack from without and capitalist counterrevolution from within. Especially in the present context, that means supporting the right of North Korea to develop nuclear weapons along with the delivery system necessary to make them an effective deterrent to the Pentagon war machine. Nuclear weapons in this day of the American nuclear cowboy are the only guarantee of national independence.

The ISO is an effective NCO on the campuses across the country. Their vision of "unity" means subservience to the liberal wing of the ruling class. Having helped build a movement that was shot through with illusions in the UN, they now cynically warn against liberals who urge that the "movement that opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq should now assume the role of lobbyists for a bigger UN 'fig leaf'" (*Socialist Worker*, 5 September). And during the 1991 Gulf War the ISO endorsed a demonstration that explicitly included demands supporting UN sanctions against Iraq. Today the ISO is again ready to build a "movement" with the enemies of the workers and minorities. While they denounce "direct action" activists for being too militant, they call for "the widest possible expressions of antiwar opposition," including "everyone who wants to say no to Bush's war" (*Socialist Worker*, 2 April). They welcome everyone from Democrats to Republicans, cops and those who didn't oppose the war on Afghanistan (the U.S. revenge on the Afghan people for harboring the Taliban and Osama bin Laden, the CIA's creations). They have proven themselves ready to hustle votes for the Green Party—a third capitalist party no less committed to the existing imperialist order than the Democrats and Republicans and which is colorblind to racism and black oppression.

The Workers World Party, the leader of the ANSWER antiwar coalition, is the opposite side of the same reformist coin of the ISO. They embrace the Stalinist bureaucracies of the deformed workers states unconditionally and thus undermine the defense of these same states and the nationalized property forms that they are based on. They reject the call for political revolution to oust the Stalinist misrulers and to return to the internationalist road of Lenin and Trotsky. The smashing of capitalist class rule is historically progressive, but the construction of a socialist society is possible only on an international scale based on a planned economy of abundance. The Stalinist mismanagers are nationalist in outlook, policing economies of scarcity. They are parasitic obstacles on the road to socialism.

While Workers World may sometimes cheer for revolution abroad, they do not work for revolution at home. They complain that the Democratic presidential candidates "are desperately trying to co-opt the anti-Bush mass movement," as though the "anti-Bush" movement boosted by WWP is anything other than a vehicle for the Democrats (*Workers World*, 11 September). Their ANSWER propaganda echoes the labor officials and the liberals—they say (in a leaflet for a January 18 antiwar protest), "Like Dr. King did during the Vietnam War, we will demand that hundreds of billions of dollars be spent on jobs, education, housing, healthcare and to meet human needs—not for wars of aggression in the Third World."

This sounds all very sweet. But we must inform these sweethearts that the U.S. capitalists have acquired their untold billions of dollars through the exploitation of labor and the immiseration of the oppressed. If you want to get your hands on the money, you have to break the power of the capitalists and place the means of production in the hands of those whose labor creates the wealth of society. Besides Dr. King, the Workers World Party's favorite liberal "peace" activist is Ramsey Clark, a Democratic Party attorney general during the Vietnam War and the bloody COINTELPRO domestic war against the Black Panther Party. This makes sense—the famous Black Muslim cartoon showing Dr. King praying during the 1965 L.A. Watts rebellion, "If there is any blood spilled in the streets, let it be *our* blood," complements Clark, who made sure that this was true with the blood of Panthers.

As we argued in the mobilizing call for our revolutionary internationalist contingents in the October 2002 demonstrations: "It is futile to oppose war against Iraq but not oppose the economic system which generates war and the ideology that legitimizes it. Moreover, pushing illusions in the reformability of the bloody American imperialist state can only result in the demobilization of the only force in capitalist society that can challenge the rule of the capitalist class: the working class."

I simply urge you to join us in this fight for new October Revolutions by embracing a revolutionary internationalist perspective. Join us! Those who labor must rule!■

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VANCOUVER

Twelve Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

We conclude below an edited and expanded version of a presentation by comrade Victor Gibbons at a public Spartacist educational in New York City on April 27. In particular we have added a more extensive account of the intervention of the International Communist League in the USSR in the early 1990s which was taken from a July 12 presentation by comrade Gibbons in London. Part One appeared in Workers Vanguard *No. 809 (12 September).*

PART TWO

The International Communist League intervened at the crucial moments in East Germany—the German Democratic Republic (DDR)—in 1989-90 and in the Soviet Union in 1990-92. We put forward the program of proletarian political revolution to overthrow the decomposing Stalinist regimes as the *only possible way* to defeat the powerful, imperialist-backed forces of capitalist counterrevolution. Today, we need to make a special effort to put ourselves back into this period, before the defeats that followed, in order to appreciate the reality of the revolutionary opportunity that opened up, and how the ICL seized upon it.

In the summer of 1989, the Soviet Union was shaken by the miners in the first ever nationwide strike. Their strike committees resembled soviets, running whole cities. That same summer, Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev visited Beijing and saw the Chinese deformed workers state's People's Liberation Army beginning to melt in the face of an incipient political revolution triggered by the mass protests in Tiananmen Square. Workers, soldiers and students together were singing the "Internationale." It began to look like Hungary 1956, where the pro-socialist working class had erected soviets and briefly shattered the Stalinist regime.

Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping drowned the nascent proletarian political revolution in blood. But within a few months, the spectre of political revolution was back, in East Germany. As mass protests besieged the discredited Stalinist bureaucracy, we threw our international resources into the fight for a red Germany of workers councils based on political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West.

Our daily *Arprekorr* (Workers Press Correspondence) called for the founding of workers and soldiers councils, like those in Russia in 1917. Workers from large East Berlin factories came to ask us how to do that. Because of our propaganda, units of the East German army formed soldiers committees, some of which circulated *Arprekorr*. It was these units the panicky Stalinists dissolved. We published internationalist greetings in several languages reaching out to workers from Vietnam, Cuba and Poland in the DDR and to Soviet soldiers and officers stationed there. ICL comrades were addressing meetings of hundreds of Soviet soldiers and officers with our Trotskyist program. (For further details, see "Revolution vs. Counterrevolution in Germany, 1989-90," *WV* Nos. 730 and 731, 25 February and 10 March 2000.)

3 January 1990: Spartakist-initiated demonstration of 250,000 in Treptow Park, East Berlin protesting Nazi desecration of Red Army monument. Spartakist Workers Party poster in March 1990 East German election: "No to Capitalist Reunification!"

Spartakist photos

The signal event of our intervention in the DDR was the 3 January 1990 united-front demonstration against the desecration of Berlin's Treptow Park Soviet Soldier Memorial by German rightists. The demonstration was essentially in defense of the DDR workers state and against the drive for capitalist annexation by the West German imperialists, the heirs of Hitler's Third Reich. The impact of our appeal was such that the ruling Stalinist party, the SED/PDS, was compelled to join in building this demonstration of a quarter of a million workers and soldiers initiated by us. Lothar Bisky, a leader of the SED/PDS, told us, "You have the workers."

I and another comrade were in Leningrad a few days later when the issues of the main Communist Party daily, *Pravda*, and the Soviet Army daily, *Red Star*, came out with coverage of the Treptow demonstration. Both papers hailed the demonstration, and the Soviet Army paper ran a prominent photo of our signed Trotskyist banner reading "Down With NATO! Defend the Soviet Union!" over our hammer, sickle and four!

The mass ICL-initiated protest awoke Gorbachev, Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze & Co. with a start from their illusion in a gradual transition to capitalism in the DDR. Here's what Gorbachev himself said in an interview on German TV on the tenth anniversary of those events:

> "We changed our point of view on the process of unification of Germany under the impact of events that unfolded in the DDR. And an especially critical situation came about in January. In essence, a breakdown of structures took place. A threat arose—a threat of disorganization, of a big destabilization. This began on January 3 and [went] further almost every day.... This was, as you know, like a torrent of fiery lava: the current was flowing." [our translation from TV transcript]

Gorbachev recounts that when West German chancellor Helmut Kohl visited Moscow shortly thereafter, the Soviet leadership urged him to swallow up the DDR immediately. In his own way Gorbachev recognized and feared that *our Trotskyist program* of proletarian political revolution and socialist internationalism was beginning to attract mass support among the East German (and from there, the Soviet) working class.

It was under the impact of Tiananmen, the Soviet miners strike and Treptow that Gorbachev endorsed Boris Yeltsin's plan for a 500-day forced march to capitalist restoration in August 1990. At the same time, the terminal disintegration of the Kremlin bureaucracy also made it possible for the ICL to openly establish our direct presence in the USSR. We began massively distributing our first leaflet, "Soviet Workers: Smash Yeltsin/Gorbachev 500-Day Plan!", and published the first issue of our Russian-language *Byulleten' Spartakovtsev* (Spartacist Bulletin), titled "What Is Trotskyism."

I'll give one dramatic example of how we fought to mobilize the Soviet proletariat on the basis of a revolutionary interna-

Peter Turnley

TASS

The spectre of political revolution: Beijing workers (left) arrive in Tiananmen Square, May 1989. Right: Strike by Soviet miners in summer of 1989 threw up incipient workers councils (soviets).

tionalist program and perspective. That was at the October 1990 Soviet Coal Miners Congress held in Donetsk, Ukraine—the heartland of the mass strike wave the year before.

There were only two of us, but politically it was the ICL on the one side and, on the other, U.S. and British embassy representatives, the AFL-CIO's Freedom House, the Russian fascist NTS and, last but not least, the scab British "Union of Democratic Miners" (UDM), an anti-Communist outfit formed and financed in an attempt to break the great British coal strike of 1984-85 led by Arthur Scargill's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The Soviet miners had raised huge funds in solidarity with the British miners and their union during the strike. This Soviet aid was a powerful countermeasure to the red-baiting campaign against Scargill and the NUM conducted by the Tory government of Margaret Thatcher and the British ruling class in general. Now the "AFL-CIA" types were pushing Soviet miners to repudiate their past support to Scargill and demanded the NUM hand over the money to the scab UDM!

But the ICL spiked this attempt and caused a sensation. At the congress of 900 delegates, we sold over 600 copies of *Byulleten' Spartakovtsev* and we exposed the scab role of the UDM. Various delegations took back whole stacks of our bulletin. We played a crucial role in the decision of the congress ***not*** to pursue the UDM's appeal to join in denouncing Scargill. The remarkable thing about this was that the bourgeoisie was represented by every spy agency and fascist around, but the proletariat's historic stake was *represented by the ICL alone*. Our singular role demonstrated that our program had an impact vastly, even explosively, out of proportion to our tiny size. We counted on the power of our Trotskyist program to have this same explosive impact across the USSR.

August 1991: ICL on the Last Barricades

The introduction of economic competition and other market mechanisms served to intensify regional disparities between industrially more advanced and more backward areas and to embolden reactionary separatist forces in the better-off republics, like the Baltics. Openly bourgeois movements sired by Gorbachev had won elections during 1990 in Russia, the Baltics and other Soviet republics. They sought to gain as much control as they could over the local militias, armed forces and budgets. The leading figure in this camp was the head of the Russian republic, Boris Yeltsin, formerly one of Gorbachev's chief lieutenants, who had split from the Kremlin leader to the right.

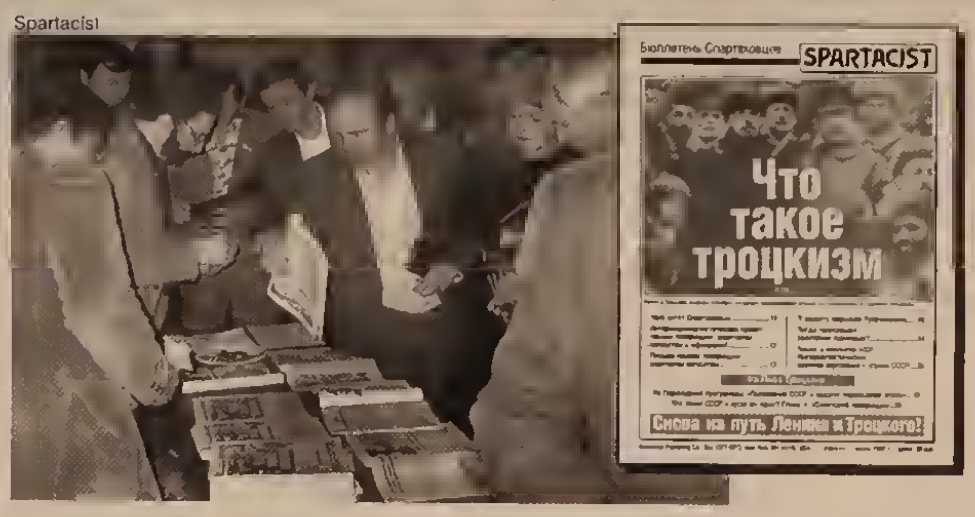
Opposing Yeltsin and the pro-Western "democrats" were the so-called "conservatives" or "patriots" of the Stalinist bureaucracy based in the military-industrial complex and CPSU apparatus. Contrary to the propaganda of Western imperialism and its Russian camp followers, the "conservatives" were n*ot* committed to preserving a collectivized economy, much less to restoring the old Stalinist order. Rather they wanted to preserve a USSR-wide state formation while introducing capitalism more slowly and in a way that benefited themselves. Gorbachev, now officially president of the USSR, swung between the "democrats" and "conservatives."

On August 20, 1991, a new Union Treaty was to be signed granting far greater control over economic policy and the armed forces to the constituent republics of the USSR. It was to prevent this new treaty that the day before a group of Gorbachev's lieutenants declared they were taking power in the Kremlin in the name of the State Emergency Committee (EC). Throughout the day, tanks and armored personnel carriers rolled into Moscow. I went among them and talked to the soldiers. It turned out that none of them had the slightest hint of what they were there to do. As soon became evident, neither did their commanders.

Yeltsin responded by denouncing the EC as an attempt to restore the "Communist" system and moved to organize a countercoup, setting up barricades around the White House, the Russian presidential headquarters in Moscow. Yet the EC made no move to arrest Yeltsin or otherwise obstruct his efforts to mobilize whatever forces he could against them. Moreover, Yeltsin was throughout in open communication with U.S. president George Bush Sr., who became the co-organizer of Yeltsin's countercoup.

In an effort to gain the acceptance of Western, above all American, imperialism, the EC issued a proclamation which made no mention at all of "socialism." Rather they pledged to continue Gorbachev's course, that is, to promote private property and to honor all of Gorbachev's foreign policy commitments. Domestically, the EC declared martial law and told the workers to stay home.

Spartacist



Above: Miners at October 1990 congress in Donetsk bought hundreds of copies of Russian-language *Spartacist Bulletin*. May 1991: ICL comrades at East German air base address 300 Soviet officers and soldiers commemorating Red Army victory over Nazi Third Reich.

Spartakist

When Bush, nonetheless, made it clear that Yeltsin was his man in Russia, the EC rapidly disintegrated. Yeltsin and his henchmen quickly moved into the resulting power vacuum.

The ascendancy of Boris Yeltsin's capitalist-restorationist forces in August 1991 was a pivotal event determining the fate of the Soviet Union. There was no longer a central Soviet government presiding over USSR state organs or over the governments of the constituent republics. These now began declaring their independence from the USSR. But the final undoing of the October Revolution was n*ot yet* a foregone conclusion. Only those who were politically desirous of washing their hands of the now-fractured workers state were in a hurry to immediately write off the USSR.

The ICL, on the contrary, uniquely raised the alarm, distributing tens of thousands of copies throughout the Soviet Union of our August 1991 statement, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" This was the *first* anti-Yeltsin communist protest in all of the USSR. It began:

> "The working people of the Soviet Union, and indeed, the workers of the world, have suffered an unparalleled disaster whose devastating consequences are now being played out. The ascendancy of Boris Yeltsin, who offers himself as Bush's man, coming off a botched coup by Mikhail Gorbachev's former aides, has unleashed a counterrevolutionary tide across the land of the October Revolution."

But we insisted that the battle was not yet over. We called upon the Soviet working class to mobilize against the still-weak Yeltsin regime before it was able to consolidate a new capitalist state apparatus amid the fractured state structures of the former USSR:

> "While Yeltsin & Co. now see a clear field to push through a forced-draft reintroduction of capitalism, *the outcome is not yet definitively decided*.... The Soviet proletariat, whose capacity for militant action was dramatically shown in the miners strike of the summer of 1989, has not been heard from. Opposition from the factories against the ravages of capitalist assault could throw a giant wrench in the works and prevent the rapid consolidation of counterrevolution." [emphasis in original]

In this historic statement, we said a call for workers militias "to smash the counterrevolutionary Yeltsinite demonstrations was certainly in order." We called for the formation of workers councils to fight the plunder and destruction of the planned, collectivized economy; for soldiers and officers committees to prevent the army from being used to attack workers' interests; for multinational workers defense guards to ward off communalist butchery and anti-Communist terror; for a return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky through the forging of a Trotskyist party and linking the struggle in the USSR to the class struggle internationally.

In sharpest opposition to the ICL, almost every "far left" group in North America and West Europe supported and hailed the Yeltsin-Bush countercoup in the name of defending "democracy" against Stalinism. The British group then affiliated to the anti-Soviet reformists of the International Socialist Organization exulted: "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991). Posing to the left of the ISO is the small League for the Revolutionary Party, which stated that "revolutionary workers would have...tactically lined up in a military bloc with Yeltsin to defeat the immediate threat to workers' interests" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Fall 2002). Catherine Verla, a leading spokesman for the international pseudo-Trotskyist current then led by Ernest Mandel, the United Secretariat, likewise asserted: "It was necessary to unhesitatingly oppose the coup and, on these grounds, to fight at Yeltsin's side" (*Inprecor*, 29 August 1991).

Supporters of a number of "left" groups, like the British Workers Power, literally stood on Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary barricades. The Russian affiliate of Peter Taaffe's British Socialist Party and Committee for a Workers' International even crowed in its newspaper *Rabochaya Demokratiya* (October 1991) of sabotaging efforts by workers to mobilize against Yeltsin and Bush's "democrats," warning of

> "the danger of support to the putschists by workers organizations that did not share the principles of the 'democrats'—the rule of private property and capitalist power. And that is exactly what happened...at several factories the workers even tried to organize defense detachments in support of the putschists.
>
> "From the morning on, all of our members explained to workers at their enterprises that the positions of the Emergency Committee did not coincide with their interests. In addition to this, they connected up with worker activists of other organizations, in order to prevent hasty actions."

In mobilizing internationally to fight for a Trotskyist party in the Soviet Union, we acted on Trotsky's injunction:

> "But in the event of this worst possible variant, a tremendous significance for the subsequent course of the revolutionary struggle will be borne by the question: *where* are those guilty for the catastrophe? Not the slightest taint of guilt must fall upon the revolutionary internationalists. In the hour of mortal danger, they must remain on the last barricade."
>
> —"The Class Nature of the Soviet State" (October 1933)

Our Lenin-Trotsky Fund, collected from around the world, made it possible for our Moscow Station to bring in reinforcements, engage in mass literature distribution and translations, secure office facilities—all in the effort to spur the proletariat to mount a political revolution against the capitalist-restorationist regime and revive the Soviet Union as a workers state. This fund also made it possible for our Prometheus Research Library to bring to the Soviet workers the first ever Russian-language version of Trotsky's 1928 *The Communist International After Lenin*, the key founding documents of world Trotskyism in opposition to "socialism in one country."

Our Fourth Internationalist banner was there for all to see at the Revolution Day celebration in Moscow on 7 November 1991. The demonstration was banned, but some 100,000 Muscovites—mostly workers—came out in defiance. So fearful were Yeltsin & Co. of a confrontation that the ban was lifted at the last minute. Our intervention that day was spectacularly successful. The ICL's Moscow Station sold thousands of pieces of literature, including our call to defeat Yeltsin-Bush counterrevolution. Nobody was more shocked at the turnout than the Stalinist "patriot" organizers, who cut it off midway when the ICL demanded the microphone in Red Square. The Stalinists knew about the Spartacists at Treptow!

Another important test was Yeltsin's murderous assault on the Soviet Red Army Day march in Moscow, 23 February 1992. The elite OMON militia forces boxed in the demonstrators, beating one Soviet general to death right there in public. The pavement of Moscow's main street ran red with blood. The message was clear: a new master was blooding his attack dogs. Partisans of the Soviet state, opponents of private property forms, could be demonstratively lynched in the land of October. We immediately issued a new leaflet calling for "Workers and Soldiers Soviets to Stop Capitalist Restoration!" We warned the moment was growing late; the would-be bosses were taking the streets of Moscow away; and that White tsar Boris was bent on a decisive massacre, a new Bloody Sunday.

It was right in this period, on 9 February 1992, that our leading spokesman in Moscow, comrade Martha Phillips, was murdered at her post. The authorities stonewalled while we tried in vain to find out who killed her. She paid the ultimate price to plant the flag of the ICL on the last barricades in defense of the gains of October.

Yet working-class resistance—strikes and protests—to the Yeltsin regime, even after it had introduced economic "shock therapy" in early 1992, was sporadic and ineffective. Furthermore, the "hard-line" Stalinist opposition repulsed and

continued on page 8

Soviet Union...

(continued from page 7)

demoralized the ***multinational*** Soviet proletariat by making a political bloc with Russian fascists and other right-wing nationalists, the so-called "'red'-brown coalition." We exposed these anti-Semitic Great Russian chauvinists for what they were to anti-Yeltsin workers and youth, devoting the entire issue of *Byulleten' Spartakovtsev* No. 3 (Spring 1992) to the fight for a Leninist party that was a tribune of the people, combatting every form of national chauvinism, anti-Semitism, and anti-woman and anti-gay bigotry roiling the brown tide of capitalist counterrevolution. We also, uniquely, mobilized in defense of the besieged foreign students of Moscow's Patrice Lumumba People's Friendship University after Yeltsin's police murdered an African student in August 1992.

When the air traffic controllers went on strike that same month, Yeltsin demonstratively launched his first full-scale, frontal attack on the Soviet trade unions. The ICL put out a leaflet rallying to the union's defense. Tellingly, the ex-Stalinist has-beens joined their fascist-monarchist partners of the "'red'-brown coalition" in *opposing* the strike.

Martha Phillips

WV Photo

1948-1992

When by late 1992 the counterrevolution in Russia had been consolidated, we analyzed the main factors underlying the fateful political passivity of the Soviet working class:

> "In the name of building 'socialism in one country,' the Stalinists—through terror and lies—methodically attacked and eroded every aspect of the revolutionary and internationalist consciousness which had made the Soviet working class the vanguard detachment of the world proletariat....
>
> "Atomized and bereft of any anti-capitalist leadership, lacking any coherent and consistent socialist class consciousness, skeptical about the possibility of class struggle in the capitalist countries, the Soviet working class did not rally in resistance against the encroaching capitalist counterrevolution. And as Trotsky noted in *The Third International After Lenin*: 'If an army capitulates to the enemy in a critical situation without a battle, then this capitulation completely takes the place of a "decisive battle," in politics as in war'."
>
> —*WV* No. 564, 27 November 1992, reprinted in Spartacist pamphlet *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled* (August 1993)

The Ravages of Counterrevolution

A half decade after the counterrevolution, the desperate and despairing condition of Russian working people was movingly expressed in a letter from a rural village cited on a Russian trade-union Web site:

> "We are dying in the direct meaning of the word. The collective farm is hardly breathing. For a year we have been paid no wages. No money has been found to buy fuel for sowing. Everybody sits at home depressed. Many get cancer and other diseases. We are perishing like flies."

By 1997, the real value of the average wage in the Russian Federation had fallen by almost 80 percent, of pensions by almost 70 percent. This was accomplished by "shock therapy" freeing price controls and setting off an inflation rate as high as 20,000 percent in 1992! I remember the horror on the faces of coworkers as the ruble lost half its value in one month. Before my eyes they became paupers. But even having a wage presumes one has a job, and who did? According to a September-October 1998 study sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency, only 50 percent of Russian adults were employed and only a quarter of the so-called "employed" got paid with any regularity.

Some 75 percent of the population of the Russian Federation was now compelled to grow some or all of their own food, moreover, in a society that was 70 percent urban. Individual garden plots sprang up along commuter train lines around every city, providing the major source of food for the urban population. Every Sunday evening the commuter trains headed back into Moscow were full of bone-tired workers, including those with college educations, hands cracked and dirty from scratch-gardening, too tired to think except perhaps when talk turned to farming tips. A nuclear power plant engineer in my neighborhood quit his job to guard his potato patch! An educated urban proletariat had reverted to scratch subsistence farming.

In the period between 1960 and 1980, a massive construction campaign had provided (for a nominal rent and utility charges) every urban family with its own apartment with modern amenities, usually including a telephone, central heating, electrical power, water, sewage and local public transport. All this was considered a right of Soviet citizenship. A truly historic achievement.

But in 1991 all municipal construction halted, and for the next five years housing rotted, looking more like dark caves than comfortable homes. Municipal water pipes began to burst, at times turning whole city intersections into boiling mud pits in which people fell to horrible deaths. The basic problem was that the service life of the heating grid was designed for only 20 years. Breakdowns have increased exponentially, and in 2010, less than seven years from now, the entire national heating grid in Russia will face complete collapse.

Many bourgeois ideologues in the West blame the unprecedented economic collapse of post-Soviet Russia on the criminal behavior of its new capitalist operators (the "oligarchs"), who looted the productive wealth of the former USSR and then transferred their ill-gotten gains to Western banks. But the basic underlying cause is the destructive logic of the capitalist system itself. As we explained in a 1994 article titled "Post-Soviet Russia: Immiseration and Chaos":

> "The employment of labor clearly demonstrates the fundamental difference between the capitalist system and a collectivized economy, even one subject to pervasive bureaucratic mismanagement and parasitism as was the former Soviet bloc. The aim of a capitalist firm is to maximize the return on the money invested in that particular company. Managers therefore seek to maximize output (if it can be sold) while minimizing the cost and employment of labor. Hence, you can see in North America and West Europe mass unemployment coexisting with brutal speedup for those workers fortunate enough to have jobs. Some people are forced to beg in the streets while others are forced to work 10-12 hours a day.
>
> "The aim of a collectivized economy is to maximize the output of society as a whole by utilizing *all* available resources, both labor and the means of production. Moreover, Soviet-bloc governments prevented unemployment by not laying off workers even if their additional contribution to production was less than the wage paid them. That was far better than having them live on welfare or beg in the streets, risking unrest. As a result, industrial enterprises in East Europe and the ex-USSR were grossly overmanned by the standards of capitalist profitability....
>
> "Now with the capitalist counterrevolution, production costs in post-Soviet Russia are being driven into line with those on the world market through a massive contraction of industrial capacity and an even greater slashing of the industrial labor force."
>
> —*WV* No. 595, 4 March 1994

Over the past five years Russia has experienced some modest economic growth, mainly as a result of the higher price of oil on the world market. Russia's role in the world economy is now similar to those Third World countries critically dependent on the export of a few products. Oil, natural gas, oil products and metallic ore make up almost two-thirds of Russia's exports by value. What little productive investment is taking place is overwhelmingly concentrated in these extractive sectors.

However, the basic economic infrastructure and manufacturing industry continues to deteriorate, starved for capital investment. In 2002, more than two-thirds of the equipment in use in the Russian Federation had been in place for 15 years and almost a third for 20 years. The average age of Russia's industrial plant is three times that of North America's, West Europe's and Japan's.

Furthermore, with capitalism based on social inequality and the need to extract ever-greater profits from the working class, the "improved" economic performance in the past few years has *not* mitigated the terrible impoverishment of the Russian people and its resulting social pathology. Thus the life expectancy of Russian men continues to fall while infant mortality continues to rise.

A Demographic Holocaust

In the Soviet Union, the entire population—children in school, adults at work—were required to undergo annual screenings for diseases such as tuberculosis (TB). But as a Russian journalist commented in *Izvestia* (16 April 2002): "The universal preventative examinations that were regarded as one of the great achievements of Soviet medicine died along with Soviet medicine itself."

The number of HIV cases in Russia last year was estimated to be between one and two million. A recent study by the World Bank projected that by 2020, up to 10 percent of Russia's rapidly shrinking population would be infected. Primarily spread in Russia via drug users' dirty needles, a growing avenue for the spread of HIV/AIDS has since become prostitution. By 1999, 14 percent of prostitutes in Moscow were infected. The helpless age (10 to 14) of some of the prostitutes and the piggish johns who pay extra for unprotected sex guarantee its continuing rapid spread.

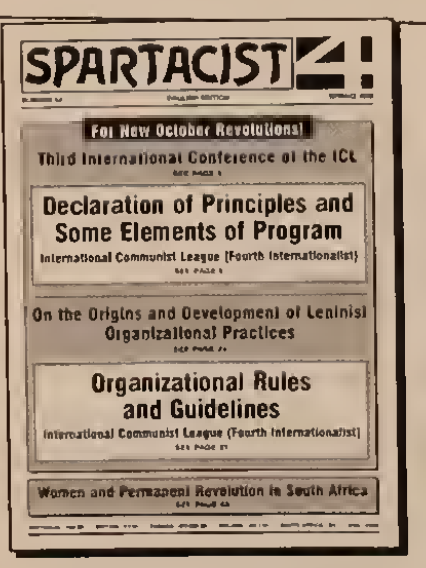
As much as poverty and drugs, a major factor behind the explosion of AIDS in Russia is the reactionary ideological filth pushed in place of health education. There is an explosion of HIV/AIDS in Irkutsk, a main Siberian city on the Afghan drug route. But the chairman of the province's Committee on Youth Policy rails against the "moral degeneration" of "'safe' sex and sex education classes." The Russian Orthodox church campaigns against the use of condoms; fascists march against their use to promote Russian procreation. In fact, they are promoting the extermination of the Russian people.

Most ominously, the AIDS epidemic is intersecting a TB epidemic. One medical specialist warns: "When the HIV epidemic hits the pool of latent TB infections, there's going to be an explosion of MDR-TB [Multiple Drug Resistant TB]. TB and HIV are like gasoline and a match." Studies now find TB in 70 percent of Russia's homeless, 20 to 30 percent of the prison population and 40 percent of refugees from the war in Chechnya and other areas. Soviet prisons were plenty brutal, but they were *not* hothouses for plagues. Now each year 30,000 former prisoners with active TB and 10,000 with MDR-TB are being released into the general population with little or no medical follow-up.

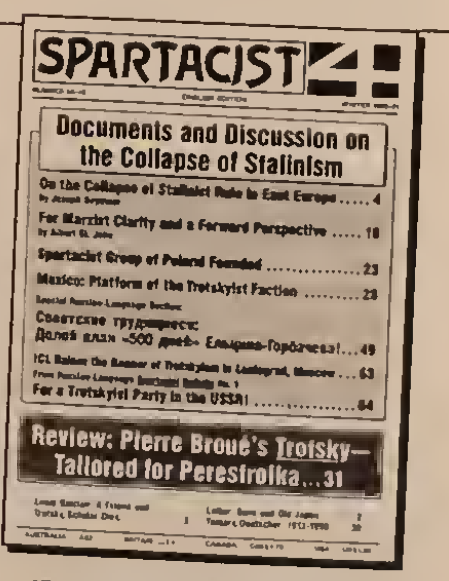
The Brutal Oppression of Youth and Women

The overall degradation of Russia's populace is compounded by the special oppression of youth and women. A leading Russian pediatrician estimates that only 5 to 10 percent of children are healthy. Child malnutrition is now the norm, and by 1999 from 15 to 45 percent of children in the Russian Federation

Moscow, 1 December 1991: ICL organizes cleanup of Karl Marx statue defaced by Yeltsin's mob. Banner reads: "No to the Restoration of Capitalism! Yes to the Gains of October!"



No. 54, Spring 1998, $2 (48 pages)



No. 45-46, Winter 1990-91, $1.50 (64 pages)

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under the age of 15, depending on the province, were diagnosed as mentally retarded. As of last year, there were an estimated several million "orphans" in Russia—more than were left in the wake of World War II! These orphans' parents are mostly still alive; they were *abandoned*. The character of Russia's orphanages can be measured in the fact that one-third of those who grow up in them become alcoholics and 10 percent commit suicide within a year of leaving.

But only a third of Russia's castaway children are even in orphanages. The others live in cellars, attics, abandoned houses and in larger cities by seeking shelter from the cold in sewer systems. Such youth are a modern-day reappearance on the Russian landscape of the *bezprizorniky*. These were the packs of wild children who emerged from the ruins of World War I and the Russian Civil War, preying in gangs on the towns and descending like wild dogs on rural villages. In 1921, the Soviet government formed a commission headed by the Bolshevik leader Feliks Dzerzhinsky to spearhead a nationwide campaign which saved several million *bezprizorniky*, giving them full lives as Soviet citizens. This chapter of Soviet power and the saving of the *bezprizorniky* remain a point of pride to this day.

Contrast this to what capitalist counterrevolution in Russia and the other former Soviet republics offers its castaway children. Petty theft by boys in Kyrgyzstan is punished by up to half a year in prison, often in solitary confinement, with no education or even parental visits. In Georgia, "repeat offender" youth can be jailed up to three years without any trial. And what does it mean for a youth to be in the general prison population? It means rape and other sexual assaults. This unspeakable barbarity is made worse by the level of AIDS among prisoners.

In 1993 *Women and Revolution* published an extensive article titled "From East Berlin to Tashkent: Capitalist Counterrevolution Tramples on Women." Today I will limit myself to something new that has proliferated in the decade since that article was published, the international sex trade. From Russia alone it is estimated that 160,000 women each year are trafficked to Europe and Asia. They are drawn by ads offering work, or simply kidnapped. Once delivered, their passports are taken from them and they are terrorized into submission. The profits from this sex slavery out of Russia match even those of its drug business—about $7 billion annually. The women and girls are sold several times over, each time upping their buy-out ransom. A particularly horrific example came to light late last year when Swedish police questioned a 13-year-old Russian girl who reported being kept in a locked van as a sex slave for two years, driven by Russian pimps from one city in Europe to another.

Chechnya and Other Nationalist Bloodbaths

We've talked about what the return to the capitalist profit system has brought. The other major catastrophe has been the reimposition of bourgeois nation-states across the territory of the former USSR.

Here it's necessary to emphasize that the Bolsheviks came to power by championing the struggles of the scores of nationalities trapped in what Lenin called the tsarist "prison house of peoples." This was an integral part of the Bolsheviks' struggle for world socialist revolution leading to a communist society in which the rise of international productive forces brings about the dissolution of all nation-states. The Bolsheviks could not have won influence over Russia's *multinational* working class, to say nothing of the urban petty bourgeoisie and rural peasant masses, without being the *best champions* of the just causes of the oppressed Polish, Ukrainian, Baltic, Caucasian and Central Asian peoples. This proletarian internationalism was reflected in the composition of the Bolshevik Central Committee: Lenin was a Russian, Trotsky a Jew, Dzerzhinsky a Pole, Shaumyan an Armenian, Stalin a Georgian, Stuchka a Latvian, and so on.

The nascent Kremlin bureaucracy demonstrated its first alien political impulses through the Russian-centered apparat's chauvinist disregard for the rights of minority peoples. Lenin launched his final political struggle in late 1922-early 1923 against Stalin's bureaucratic abuse of the Caucasian peoples. As the degeneration of the Soviet workers state deepened, the bureaucratic caste went further toward Great Russian chauvinism as a political-ideological glue for its brittle rule.

But even this was held in check by the need to preserve the USSR as a vast multinational state. In marked contrast to capitalism, the centrally planned collectivized economy made possible an allocation of resources which brought about a relative equality between the various national republics making up the USSR. This resulted in the rapid socio-economic and cultural development of the most backward peoples of the former tsarist empire (e.g., in Central Asia) and also eased historic national tensions (e.g., in the Caucasus).

The progress of the Tajik people in Soviet Central Asia, in contrast to their ethnic counterparts across the border in Afghanistan, is only the most striking example. In the Caucasus, centuries-old blood feuds among the patchwork of geographically interpenetrated peoples were for the first time abated through the struggle to root out the sheiks, Cossack atamans, landlords and mullahs, and to establish a new life based on economic modernization and rising living standards. At the same time, Soviet industrial development created a historically new pattern of ethnic interpenetration, this time of proletarian populations in industrial and mining centers across the USSR. Workers of different nationalities frequently intermarried. They and their children began to no longer think of themselves as Ukrainian or Armenian but rather as Soviet.

The forces of capitalist counterrevolution—from Russia and Ukraine to the Caucasus and Central Asia—have used nationalism (often linked to religion) as their main political-ideological battering ram. The capitalist law of the jungle dictates that each capitalist state must have one dominant nationality. All the historic ethnic patchworks which had begun to weave together into a common Soviet pattern were now torn asunder. Over a hundred armed national, ethnic and religious conflicts have erupted across the former Soviet bloc, bringing death and destruction to millions.

By far the biggest bloodbath brought on by the capitalist counterrevolution in the former USSR is in Chechnya. Yeltsin's colonial-style invasion in 1994 was about asserting the Kremlin's role as regional cop in the Caucasus and gaining control of the Caspian Sea oil fields. The Chechens were also to be made an example of because of their special history of heroic wars in the 19th century against the Russian tsarist conquest of the Caucasus.

The ICL forces in Russia at the time called for the *military defeat* of Yeltsin's colonial-style invasion without giving any political support to the bourgeois-nationalist regimes of Dudayev, and later Maskhadov, in Grozny, Chechnya's capital. We called for the right of the Chechen people to decide their own fate, explaining the roots of the war in the capitalist counterrevolution. We also raised the urgent need to defend the peoples of the Caucasus, Central Asia and all non-Slavic foreigners against racist pogroms and police persecution throughout Russia.

Yeltsin's invasion completely destroyed Grozny. But the Russian army was still militarily defeated by the Chechen forces. In 1996, Moscow accepted an armistice which gave Chechnya de facto independence. Then, in the winter of 1999, new Russian prime minister and soon-to-be president Vladimir Putin launched a second war against Chechnya. In part this was intended to spike the plans of the various bourgeois-nationalist regimes in the Caucasus and Caspian Sea region, acting in concert with Western oil companies, to build new oil pipelines which would exclude Russia. The second Chechen war was also an attempt to divert popular outrage in Russia and a sense of national humiliation provoked by the U.S./NATO terror bombing of Serbia, a historic Russian ally, earlier that year. Putin ran for president by reasserting Russia's military "power" through a renewed genocidal onslaught against Chechnya. In response the ICL called for the military defense of Chechnya's hard-won independence against Russia.

This war is still going on, and it is a ghastly picture of the barbarism capitalism has brought to the Caucasus. Whereas in Afghanistan in 1979-89 the Soviet Red Army's presence made possible the beginnings of a modern urban infrastructure with universities, hospitals and factories built along Soviet lines, Putin's Russian army in Chechnya has now reduced virtually every single city and town there to rubble! Russian forces have to date killed over 100,000 Chechens, that is 10 percent of the population.

For New October Revolutions!

The global toll of the USSR's destruction must be torn from the tissue of lies of the so-called "death of communism," and be put where it belongs: in the proletariat's indictment of the capitalist system in its death agony. As the revolutionary Marxist leader Rosa Luxemburg said at the beginning of the imperialist epoch, mankind's crossroads lead to *socialism or barbarism*.

The October Revolution took socialism out of the realm of theory and put its potential before us in concrete terms. The Trotskyist program of world socialist revolution is the only way that this potential can be realized, unlocking the planet's human and material resources, opening a dawn of prosperity. And the alternative, a descent into capitalist barbarism, is now visible in far greater detail.

Consider the future effects of a counterrevolutionary destruction of the People's Republic of China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. If the capitalist slavery, plunder, disintegration and wars that have devastated the former Soviet bloc were to descend on China with its population of over a billion, the Russian catastrophe will be multiplied many times over. All of East Asia will become an arena of a renewed struggle between the imperialist powers—centrally the U.S. and Japan—for the redivision of markets and spheres of exploitation. More generally, if socialist revolution does not intervene, heightened interimperialist rivalry will sooner or later lead to military conflict, very possibly dragging humanity into a nuclear holocaust.

On the other hand, a victorious proletarian political revolution in China or a socialist revolution in one of the capitalist countries will have an electrifying effect on workers around the world, as did the October Revolution of 1917. The desperate and besieged toilers of Russia, who today fight for their very survival, will once again take their place in the struggle for world socialist revolution.

These are the stakes! We know that those under our banner today are few. We are but an international, revolutionary Marxist propaganda group. Our Marxist worldview and program is based on the understanding that capitalism has created its own gravedigger, the proletariat. It exploits and brutalizes the working masses, and mobilizes them for slaughter in nationalist bloodletting and imperialist wars. Billions of toilers around the world are forced to seek a way out. The demoralizing effects of defeats such as the destruction of the Soviet Union will be overcome. New generations—less schooled but also less scarred—will enter into the struggle.

The tide will turn our way again, as it did at Treptow in January 1990. Our resources in the DDR at that point were truly small. But the power of our program, its unique capacity to render the proletariat's deepest material longings into a historically conscious force—into a Leninist vanguard party with a mass base—that program is what enabled the very small forces of the ICL to begin winning over socialist-minded workers and soldiers in East Germany. The imperialists, social democrats and Stalinists were all fearful that the proletariat had begun in the course of an incipient political revolution to rally around the ICL's banner of a Red Germany.

The political and organizational stages that we will have to pass through in the rapids of the coming class struggles are not knowable. What we do know, and what is given, is that future workers revolutions must have a Bolshevik political arsenal; its cadres must be educated in the experiences of the October Revolution, the early Communist International, Trotsky's Fourth International, and our own ICL. That is a fact! New gains will be won only by those who proved able to fight to defend past gains. As reformist and centrist opponents of Trotskyism seek shelter and fortune on the cheap among social democrats, Stalinist has-beens, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists and the like, the ICL tenaciously fights to uphold the banner of new Octobers. Join us!■

CORRECTION

In "Chickens Come Home to Roost in Kiev" (*WV* No. 808, 29 August), we incorrectly spelled out the ITO as the "International Trotskyist Organization." The name of the group is the International Trotskyist Opposition.

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Recall...

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(who is supported by many Latinos), citing his college membership in the Chicano student group MEChA and the fact that he's backed by money from Native American casinos. But black people know him best as the racist who prompted a walkout when he used the "N" word at a February 2001 meeting of black trade unionists. Meanwhile, Austrian-born actor Arnold Schwarzenegger is a member of the advisory board of U.S. English, a national "English-only" group appealing to anti-immigrant racism. (*His* best known "English-only" remark is "*hasta la vista*, baby.") Nor is this recall going exactly as the right wing planned—Schwarzenegger may be running as a Republican but he's pro-abortion and pro-gay adoptions.

Communist Tactics in Elections

In any capitalist government election, the Spartacist League begins from the standpoint of the Marxist understanding of the state. The government is not a neutral arbiter but the executive committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie. At the core of the capitalist state are institutions of organized force and violence—police, courts, prisons, army—dedicated to defending the property of the capitalist rulers. In *The State and Revolution* (1917), Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin characterized capitalist elections this way:

> "To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and oppress the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics."

We have no illusions that the road to bettering the lives of working and oppressed people can be through the ballot box. Since Karl Marx first expounded the lessons of the heroic Paris Commune of 1871, a basic tenet of revolutionary socialism has been that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes." The working class must seize power and establish its own government to expropriate the capitalist system.

Many capitalist politicians and newspapers nationally have called for curtailing the existing recall provision in the California state constitution as an excess that undermines "legitimate" election results. This provision, which dates from the 1911 reforms of Progressive Party governor Hiram Johnson to break the hold of the Southern Pacific Railroad, is a perfectly good democratic device that we defend, although its current application has some grossly undemocratic aspects. The recall ballot is divided into two parts: the first is a "yes" or "no" vote to recall Davis; the second is a vote for a candidate to replace him if he is recalled. Davis is not allowed to run on the second part, so he could conceivably lose the recall with 49 percent of the vote and be replaced by a candidate who wins by a mere plurality.

The 135-candidate recall "circus" so ridiculed by the capitalist media underscores the effective *disenfranchisement* of the population under the U.S. two-party system that creates huge obstacles to getting on the ballot, restricting the offerings to Democrats and Republicans and the occasional (today) Green or (historically) Progressive. (SWPer Britton himself is on the ballot as an independent.) As soon as a loophole allowed for easier entry into the race ($3,500 and 65 signatures), a much broader spectrum of candidates emerged. All the same, news articles on the recall focus as much on the candidates' fund-raising as on the "issues" themselves—indeed, the "election" among the capitalist candidates resembles nothing so much as an auction to the highest bidder!

As Lenin wrote, universal suffrage such as exists in the United States is:

> "Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich—that is the democracy of capitalist society. If we look more closely into the mechanism of capitalist democracy, everywhere...on all sides we see restriction after restriction upon democracy. These restrictions, exceptions, exclusions, obstacles for the poor, seem slight...but in their sum total these restrictions exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics and from an active share in democracy."

From the beginning, the U.S. Constitution was crafted for this very purpose by, for example, staggering elections and placing the selection of the president in the hands of an electoral college. The Constitution was based on the existence of slavery in half the country, while the electoral clout of the slaveowners was increased by granting them the representation of three-fifths of the slave population. The Civil War threw that provision into the dustbin of history, but the Constitution remains a very difficult document to amend—and black people still have a hard time voting (as in the state of Florida). Today intricate and expensive requirements that vary by state and city virtually forbid any but the Republicans and Democrats from running for state or federal office.

Vote for SWP's Joel Britton!

Marxists run in elections, as the Spartacist League has in the past, in order to take advantage of the heightened political interest during election time to gain a hearing for our program. But we are opposed in principle to participating in administering the bourgeois state apparatus. We run on a program for socialist revolution as the only solution to the exploitation and racial oppression inherent in capitalist society. Marxists on principle will not vote for a capitalist candidate—we stand for the complete independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie. Under certain circumstances, a small communist organization might call for a vote to a mass reformist workers party, like the Labour Party in Britain, in order to show the workers with illusions in that party that once in power, it would defend the interests of the capitalists and not the workers. Lenin called this "support...in the same way as a rope supports a hanged man." In the U.S. where there is no such party, if we are unable to run our own candidates, we have sometimes advocated critical support to a candidate whose electoral program in some key way represents a break with capitalist rule. In this spirit we support Britton's candidacy.

We support Britton's statement, "Our campaign demands the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, Africa, and elsewhere." To its credit, the SWP called to defend Iraq against the bloody American invasion. However, Britton also demands, "Bring the GIs home now!" This slogan is an accommodation to the social-patriotic "save our troops" wing of the antiwar movement that preached belief in the reformability of U.S. imperialism, begging the capitalists to "stop the war." But the struggle against war means a struggle against the capitalist system as a whole. The Spartacist League organized Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents to intervene in the antiwar movement to demand, "For class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack! Down with the UN starvation blockade!"

Furthermore, the U.S. troops are the imperialist armed forces, the instrument of American conquest and enforcers of the capitalist system of exploitation. And "at home" they are no less the enemy of the exploited and oppressed: witness the racist crackdown in Detroit in 1967 carried out by the 82nd Airborne. What would the troops do today "at home"? Last year Bush threatened to militarize the West Coast docks to break the power of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union when it was locked out by the Pacific Maritime Association.

In the 1960s during the Vietnam antiwar movement, the SWP was despised among leftist militants for building a single-issue campaign of class collaboration with the liberal antiwar bourgeoisie. While today it stands to the left in the antiwar movement, the slogan "Bring the GIs home now" leaves open the question of pursuing a similar bloc with a defeatist wing of the bourgeoisie (which so far does not exist). This is particularly true as the SWP has never repudiated its line in the Vietnam antiwar movement, which served to channel leftist students back into the pro-Democratic mainstream.

Furthermore, in the 1960s the SWP advanced the slogan, "Withdraw the troops from Viet Nam and send them to Mississippi," calling on the federal government to "protect" civil rights activists from racist attack. As we wrote at the time, "So the bourgeois imperialist army, currently engaged in massacring peasants and workers in South Viet-nam, in burning their villages and defoliating their land, and imprisoning the people in 'strategic hamlets'—this army, says the SWP, should be transferred to the American South! To advocate sending the U.S. Special Forces into Mississippi is *treachery* to the Negro struggle" (*Spartacist* election supplement, October 1964). The Spartacist League stood for armed black self-defense against racist terror.

Another cornerstone of Britton's campaign is "Stop Washington's economic war against Cuba! Normalize relations now!" The SWP fails to characterize what kind of society Cuba is, leaving the impression that it supports Cuba from the standpoint of Third World national liberation. But Cuba is a country in which the capitalists were overthrown, a huge advance for the workers and peasants, even though it has been ruled from its inception as a deformed workers state by Castro's bureaucracy rather than the workers themselves. The Spartacist League extends unconditional military defense against all imperialist attacks to Cuba, as we do the other deformed workers states—China, Vietnam and North Korea—while calling for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. The SWP is, on the other hand, utterly uncritical of Fidel Castro, whose accommodation to U.S. imperialism has led him to stab in the back countless struggles of workers and peasants throughout Latin America.

In its campaign literature, the SWP makes no distinction between Cuba and North Korea on the one hand and *capitalist* states that are the victims of imperialist aggression, Iraq and Iran, on the other. In 1979 it actually hailed Ayatollah Khomeini's assumption of power in Iran as an anti-imperialist victory! Increasingly the SWP has drifted toward enthusiasm for Third World nationalists like Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, and statements by Islamic reactionary Osama bin Laden have been published in the *Militant* (see *Militant* online, 29 October 2001, for an example). Its main public existence is through the Pathfinder book business. While it still publishes Leon Trotsky and James P. Cannon (the only remnants of its once honorable revolutionary past), its press churns out a myriad of books adulating Castro and Che Guevara as well as works by the Nicaraguan Sandinistas and the late Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso.

In his campaign statement, Britton says, "Stop INS raids and deportations—end 'no match' firings!" and in interviews has called for "supporting the fight for equal treatment of immigrants." The SWP's idea of such a fight is uncritical support to the AFL-CIO's Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, which is the union bureaucracy's vehicle for roping in the Latino vote for the Democrats. In contrast, we call for ***full citizenship rights for all immigrants*** and fight within the unions for the mobilization of its members, independent of the capitalist class, in defense of immigrants.

134 "Lesser Evils"?

The remainder of our reformist opponents base their positions in the recall election not on the class interests of the working people but on the inherently subjective index of what's popular. Accepting the framework of capitalism means that they perforce must tail some existing political entity as an "answer," seeking to pressure the capitalist state into reforming itself. Depending on which sector of society it is interested in appeasing, each reformist group alters its position on the recall accordingly. For example, when the AFL-CIO tops circled the wagons and committed millions of dollars to defend "friend of labor" Davis to the end, the Communist Party's *People's Weekly World* (30 August) blared, "California Labor Thunders 'No Recall!'" and approvingly quoted California AFL-CIO head Art Pulaski calling Davis the "best governor for working people we've had in 100 years." A truly pitiful statement of political bankruptcy!

The AFL-CIO tops have no intention of actually mobilizing organized labor's social power to struggle for what workers really need. Instead they function as the best lackeys for the false "friend of labor" Democrats, who will throw some crumbs to the exploited while they make off with the feast (the Republicans don't bother to leave crumbs). Gray Davis did overturn some of former Republican governor Pete

California: Vote No on Prop 54!

California has long been a springboard for racist crusades nationwide—from the passage of Proposition 187 in 1994 denying education and health care to undocumented workers, to Proposition 209 in 1996 banning affirmative action and Prop. 227 in 1998 scrapping bilingual education. This fall another reactionary proposition, Prop. 54—cynically called the "Racial Privacy Initiative" but also known as CRECNO (Classification by Race, Ethnicity, Color, or National Origin)—is on California's October 7 ballot to recall the governor.

In essence, this proposition would ban the gathering or publication of statistical evidence of the brutal racial discrimination endemic in racist capitalist America. Prop. 54 further supplements Prop. 209's ban of affirmative action, denying the state or other "public entities" the ability to ask about race, while allowing for exceptions in medical research and treatment, law enforcement and prison management.

Prop. 54 is being introduced by the notorious Ward Connerly, a black conservative member of the University of California Board of Regents who led the campaign for Prop. 209 in 1996. Connerly and his supporters have been cynically marketing Prop. 54 as a way to supposedly introduce a "colorblind" society where race is "becoming less relevant" and would signify "an end to the indignity of classifying people." In fact, only vile apologists for racist poison try to deny that the racial oppression of blacks and other minorities doesn't exist, and that's precisely why they need to ban the evidence with Prop. 54.

From education to social services, the rights of the working class as a whole are always attacked by playing the race card first. We seek to mobilize the integrated working class to fight for jobs and free, quality education for all, particularly reaching out to the masses of unemployed minority youth and women with special union recruitment and training programs. But racial oppression can only be banished with the overthrow of private property. Our perspective is one of revolutionary integrationism: the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. ***Vote no on racist Proposition 54!***

Wilson's most anti-labor moves (for example, the recalculation of overtime regulations favoring the bosses), while with the other hand he instituted mass layoffs, pay cuts and slashing of social programs. And when Bush threatened to militarize the docks during last year's lockout of longshore workers, the Davis administration jumped into the "war on terror" by setting up the California Anti-Terrorist Information Center (CATIC) that conspired with Oakland mayor Jerry Brown in the brutal April 7 police attack against antiwar protesters and longshoremen at the Port of Oakland.

Pleading with the government to cease such attacks builds dangerous illusions that the government can be made to serve the workers' interests. The Workers World Party correctly points out that "organizing for a no vote on the recall gives legitimacy to the Gray Davis administration" (*Workers World* online, 4 September). But in the past, the WWP has not balked at voting for capitalist politicians—witness its support for Jesse Jackson in 1984 and 1988. Today in California, it advocates a vote for candidate C.T. Weber of the Peace and Freedom Party (PFP), a petty-bourgeois formation. Weber campaigns to keep Gray Davis in office, saying, "Vote 'NO' on this flawed and dangerous recall" (undated Peace and Freedom Party campaign pamphlet). The PFP might stand for some good-sounding things, like "Free education through the university level." But Weber's stand for a "California run by and for working people" is just empty words—the PFP does not stand for a break with the capitalist parties and a fight for a workers government. The PFP is really just a sandbox for homeless leftists who have long since made their peace with bourgeois society. Insofar as they ever acquire influence, the role of such capitalist "third parties" has historically been to get the working class back on the road to electoralism—that is, they act as a shill for the Democrats.

Ted Mendoza

Janitors of SEIU Local 1877 rally outside San Francisco City Hall, August 5.

The 1934 gubernatorial candidacy of the author Upton Sinclair provides a useful reminder. Once described as "the Kerensky of the Progressive movement," Sinclair won the Democratic primary on his program of "End Poverty in California." At that point, establishment interests launched a major attack: conservatives threw their weight behind the Republicans while the liberals backed the candidate of the Progressive Party. Sinclair narrowly lost the election, but his campaign was a clear example of a bourgeois candidate attempting to pull in leftists who do not have a central commitment to the working class.

Green Party candidate Peter Camejo plays the same role today. The "progressive" stockbroker stands for a "fair tax plan" and "fiscal responsibility"—that is, he hawks himself as a better administrator and fund-raiser for the capitalist government. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) calls Camejo a "genuine progressive" and supported his gubernatorial bid in 2002. But it appears to be split on the question of advocating a vote for him. In a letters column in *Socialist Worker* (1 August), Bay Area ISO honcho Todd Chretien came out with a crass pro-Democratic Party line, calling to "reject the Republican power grab for what it is and vote 'no' on the recall," then "build a real left-wing alternative" by supporting Camejo. In *International Socialist Review* (September-October 2003), a document from the ISO Steering Committee advocates abstaining on the recall and, referring to Camejo's candidacy, says, "If he gives an indication of running a serious campaign, we should have no hesitation about endorsing him again. But at this point, we should reserve judgment." When ISO members are asked why they don't support Camejo since their organization went all out for Green Party candidate Nader in his 2000 presidential bid, they reply that Camejo doesn't have a movement behind him.

It's clear that the ISO has no class criteria but fixes its political stands based on which way the wind is blowing. With an ostensible socialist, Britton, running on a platform of opposition to the war and occupation and to the capitalist parties, the ISO instead toys with support for the candidate of the "progressive" capitalist Green Party.

In an article opposing support for Democratic "lesser evils," the ISO argues that "liberals like Kucinich have an important role to play for the Democratic Party. Rather than pulling the party to the left, they pull the left into the party" (*Socialist Worker*, 22 August). The ISO plays exactly this role outside the Democratic Party. The ISO was the most fervent exponent in the antiwar movement of ever-broader coalitions that delivered outrage over the imperialist rape of Iraq to...the Democratic Party. And to what does the ISO look for an alternative? Another *capitalist* party, the Greens, which it paints as a progressive third-party alternative to the two parties of "Corporate Ameriea."

A socialist program has to begin by telling the truth about this class society, the necessity for revolution and the task of building a workers party politically independent of the bosses' parties. As we state in our Programmatic Statement, "For Socialist Revolution in the Bastion of World Imperialism!":

> "The shell game through which the Democratic Party—the historic party of the Confederate slavocracy—is portrayed as the 'friend' of blacks and labor has been essential to preserving the rule of racist American capitalism. Our principal task in the U.S. is to break the power of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy over the labor movement. It is this bureaucracy—itself a component of the Democratic Party—which politically chains the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and is the major obstacle to revolutionary class consciousness, to the forging of a revolutionary workers party."

No vote to capitalist candidates! For a class-struggle workers party to fight for a workers government! For international socialist revolution to open a new period of human development!■

Arafat...

(continued from page 1)

Bank town of Tulkarm and dumped them in a nearby camp for three days. Israeli liberal Uri Avnery called the operation "an army exercise and test to see how the world, the media, and the Israeli public would react. And there was no reaction, which proves that it can be done. The people on the trucks could easily have been taken to the Jordan River bridges"—i.e., expelled from the Occupied Territories entirely.

Arafat has repeatedly shown himself to be a pliant and willing tool of the imperialists and the Zionist rulers, not least in the signing of the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords, which he still sees as his great triumph. That cynical fraud created a Palestinian patchwork of mini-bantustans and authorized an impotent Palestinian Authority whose only purpose was to use its CIA-trained police to repress the long-suffering Palestinian masses on behalf of the Zionist occupiers. That Sharon & Co. now threaten to kill Arafat is a statement that "negotiations" and the "road map" are a thing of the past. Underlining that point, Israel last week rejected out of hand an offer of a cease-fire by Islamic Jihad and Hamas and Arafat.

Israel's rulers are barely restrained on a loose leash by their U.S. imperialist patrons, for the time being, fearful that the elimination of Arafat would only further inflame Arab hostility to the U.S., which is already embroiled in an ongoing guerrilla war in Iraq. But while Washington mouths opposition to Israel's threats against Arafat, it vetoed a UN Security Council resolution condemning moves to deport or kill the Palestinian leader. The U.S. ruling class certainly has never had qualms about assassination as a tool of its foreign policy, from the killing of Congolese nationalist Patrice Lumumba in 1961 to the repeated attempts to assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro and the current "global war on terror," including the campaign to murder Saddam Hussein. Such assassinations have been carried out under Democratic and Republican administrations alike. Indeed, when it comes to support to the Zionist state, the Democrats are at least as rabid as the Republicans.

Gaza and West Bank residents who have expressed their sense of betrayal by the PLO leadership for abandoning the right of return and accepting the Zionist state's dictates nevertheless rallied to Arafat's defense, reflecting their recognition that all their lives are at stake as well and their disgust at Israel telling them who their leaders should be. Despair fueled by the PLO's bankrupt program of appeasement has invited anti-woman, anti-Semitic fundamentalists like Hamas to pose as fighters against the Zionist occupation. These arch-reactionaries with their program of indiscriminate bombings of civilians in Israel serve only to reinforce Zionist chauvinism among the Hebrew-speaking masses and thus help the Israeli capitalist rulers cover up for their Nazi-like policies against the Palestinians.

Today the Palestinians face bulldozed homes, barbed wire fencing, electronic sensors, guard towers, concrete walls, checkpoints and roadblocks. Gaza's entire border has been surrounded by electrical fencing for some time, and now the West Bank is also being carved up and surrounded by a wall, turning the area into a network of holding pens and ghettos. Since 1993, the number of settlers—ultra-chauvinist armed auxiliaries of the military occupation—in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem has grown to more than 400,000. At the same time it issued its warning against Arafat, the Israeli government released seven settlers who were being held for deadly attacks against Palestinians.

Defense of the Palestinian people is the urgent duty of the international working class! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories! All U.S. and allied imperialist forces out of the Near East!■

DuBois...

(continued from page 2)

officer. Black janitor Theresa Walker, a Local 444 E-Board member who played a key role in organizing the rally, was the co-emcee. The understaffed janitors have been the most under the gun, their workload constantly increased while management threatens to contract out their jobs. One-third of DuBois' co-workers defied the intense intimidation in the meter-reading department to show their support at the rally. The alternate steward there told *WV* that his department was also badly understaffed. Signs and chants called for hiring more janitors and meter readers.

The rally featured a kind of debate as some union officials who did come out in defense of DuBois urged support for the Democrats. In fact, by mobilizing the unions' own power this rally stood counterposed to the political program of the labor bureaucracy, which is to rely on Democratic Party or other capitalist "friends of labor." Indeed, union members expressed frustration that some union officials who had been busy working to support California governor Gray Davis in the current recall election did not come to the rally.

Alameda County CLC head Judy Goff portrayed the problem as the Republican Bush administration attacking the unions because the unions mobilize votes for supposedly more labor-friendly Democrats. As she told a *WV* reporter, "We have people power that we put together when it comes to the electoral process." Local 444 president Reggie Moore advocated the unions "organize at the ballot box to put Directors [members of EBMUD's elected administrative board] in office who stand with workers and then hold them accountable."

In contrast, Local 2019 president Morgan pointed out in his rally speech that "Washington, D.C. is not our salvation.... Republicans and Democrats rolled over and played dead with Patriot Act I. Sacramento is not our salvation. The only hope for us is for workers, unions to support each other like we're doing today." Addressing the rally, DuBois said, "You can't find anybody in the White Pages, Yellow Pages or anywhere else that really fights for black rights, for labor rights, except right home in our union." Emphasizing the need for the unions to take up the cause of black freedom, he called for a workers party that unites these struggles.

For decades, the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO leadership's purely legalistic strategy of voting Democrat and collaborating with the bosses and their government has *weakened* the ability of the unions to defend themselves. At the rally, Local 444 member Best told the truth when he said, "But like the Republicans, the Democratic Party represents the interests of the bosses. It's an illusion to think we can pressure EBMUD's Board of Directors or the Democrats in Sacramento to take our side.... We need our own party—not an electoral party but a fighting workers party that on a large scale organizes our strength as we have here today, to fight for the interests of workers, blacks, immigrants and women."

Local 444 was among many unions, including longshore Local 10, which endorsed the labor-centered, united-front mobilization initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense in Oakland on February 9, 2002 under the call: "No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act! Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!" This multiracial show of union power in defense of all the oppressed was mobilized by a political program to organize workers independent of all the parties and agencies of the capitalists. The kind of fighting workers party that does this on a large scale is the weapon we need to bring about a society where those who labor, rule. ***An injury to one is an injury to all—Reinstate Charles DuBois!*** ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Break with the Democrats! Forge a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

California: Vote Yes to Recall Davis! No Vote to Capitalist Parties!

OAKLAND, September 23—California's widely hated Democratic governor Gray Davis has achieved the distinction of becoming the first in the state's history to face a recall election, originally scheduled for October 7, then postponed by a federal court ruling and today rescheduled for October 7. With a personality to match his name, a penchant for bureaucratic viciousness and an obsession for venal campaign fundraising, Davis has become the focus for discontent arising from the prolonged economic crisis rocking the state. As the witty scribe Alexander Cockburn put it, "Gray Davis! There was a time once when 'lesser of two evils' actually meant something momentous, like the choice between starving to death on a lifeboat, or eating the first mate. Was there ever a man who brought the always gray phrase 'lesser of two evils' into greater disrepute?" (*CounterPunch*, 9 August).

Reuters

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Economist

Gray Davis

The California recall has assumed greater national importance as the two capitalist parties continue their petty bickering over chads, sex and fundraising—while they unite to stomp all over the world. The Republicans appear to be aiming for a California power-grab as a stepping stone to the 2004 presidential elections. And the Democrats have been hoping to win the recall through the courts, believing that any delay in the election will favor Davis, who is now hurrying a spate of new legislation aimed at rounding up more votes. Angling for the substantial Latino vote, he has signed legislation to issue California driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants—which may be the only good thing to come out of these elections.

The Spartacist League advocates a "yes" vote on the recall as a vote of no confidence in Democrat Davis, and a vote for Joel Britton, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidate, for Davis' replacement as governor, as a vote against capitalism and war. Normally, we would not consider giving even very critical support to the SWP, whose quirky reformist program and nominal existence do not make them a particularly appetizing prospect. We originally decided to abstain on the recall because we want neither to support a capitalist politician, in this case the Democratic governor, nor to implicitly support a capitalist (likely Republican) replacement. The SWP's election platform, which presents, in however crude a way, a working-class line, allows us to make concrete and clear-cut our opposition to Davis while at the same time expressing our opposition to the Republicans' attempted electoral coup.

What the working class needs is to forge, through political combat, a multiracial, class-struggle workers party to fight for a workers government. Such a revolutionary party would mobilize the workers in defense of their own class interests and in defense of the rights of the oppressed. It could unite the working masses as a whole behind a fight for free, quality education and health care, for free mass transit, for full employment for all, for an end to racial oppression and anti-immigrant discrimination, as part of the struggle for a socialist revolution.

Critical Support to the SWP for Governor

The SWP platform, as printed in the official state ballot, calls for opposition to U.S. imperialist military intervention; for the abolition of the death penalty; and for jobs for all at no cut in pay. Britton, a longtime trade unionist, says, "I'm for a workers' and farmers' government, which will abolish capitalism in the U.S. and join in the worldwide struggle for socialism." Fine words (except "farmers"? In the U.S., that means agribusiness!). But the SWP is not a step to the kind of revolutionary party the working class needs to fight for a workers government. In program and practice, the SWP is virtually uncritical of the trade-union bureaucracy, whose reliance on the "pro-labor" Democrats and the ballot box is the biggest obstacle to the working class exercising its power. Thus, while it calls for "a fighting working-class alternative to the twin parties of imperialist war and occupation," the SWP dodges the necessary political fight for working-class independence that will make that possible.

California Scheming

Beset by the nationwide depression sharpened by the dot.com bust, California faced a $38 billion deficit this year. Republicans and Democrats united to close most of the gap by slashing social programs and the wages and jobs of government workers, raising fees and taxes that disproportionately target poor and working people and borrowing heavily at high interest rates. The country's most populous state now has the lowest credit rating of any state government, approaching junk-bond status. The one growth industry that is guaranteed financing by the near-bankrupt state government is the mammoth prison system, where predominantly black and Latino inmates endure a living death in ever greater numbers.

The yearly state budget crisis in Sacramento is now as regular as the seasons. As *Workers Vanguard* No. 579 (2 July 1993) commented in "California Killer Cutbacks":

> "In part, the current budget represents the delayed impact of the 1978 Proposition 13 ballot initiative, which put a cap on property tax increases. Prop 13 was a de facto racist referendum aimed against social programs which particularly benefited blacks and other minorities—a convenient scam designed to pit petty-bourgeois homeowners against unions and government workers. The real beneficiaries were large commercial property owners, who in San Francisco alone reaped an annual windfall of some $600 million as a result of Prop 13."

Some bourgeois pundits are now looking to Prop 13 as a scapegoat on which to hang the crisis and are mooting a partial rollback of Prop 13 with respect to commercial property. However, the same forces that fueled Prop 13 are the motor behind the recall petition, led by the conservative, anti-immigrant, anti-affirmative action, millionaire Republican Congressman Darrell Issa (who now vows to call for a "no" vote on the recall if the Republican vote remains split among two or more candidates, threatening a Democratic victory). In gathering the two million or so signatures to get the recall on the ballot, organizers targeted rural and suburban areas using buzz words like "overspending taxpayers' money" to appeal to layers hostile to social welfare programs minimally benefiting poor, immigrant, black and Latino residents. At the same time, the recall has tapped into the broader discontent over the fiscal crisis and crippled economy, raising everything from "poor schools" to the energy crisis on which the Enron execs and the other energy companies got rich.

The recall campaign thus contains truly volatile elements of a populist revolt. Davis cried right from the start that the recall was part of a "right-wing conservative agenda" trying to overturn the results of last November's "legitimate" election. While some on the left imply to the contrary that the recall is a left-wing revolt, such inchoate populist anger can go either way, with the dividing line often being racism or anti-immigrant chauvinism. Right-wingers are whipping up hysteria over the candidacy of Democrat Cruz Bustamante

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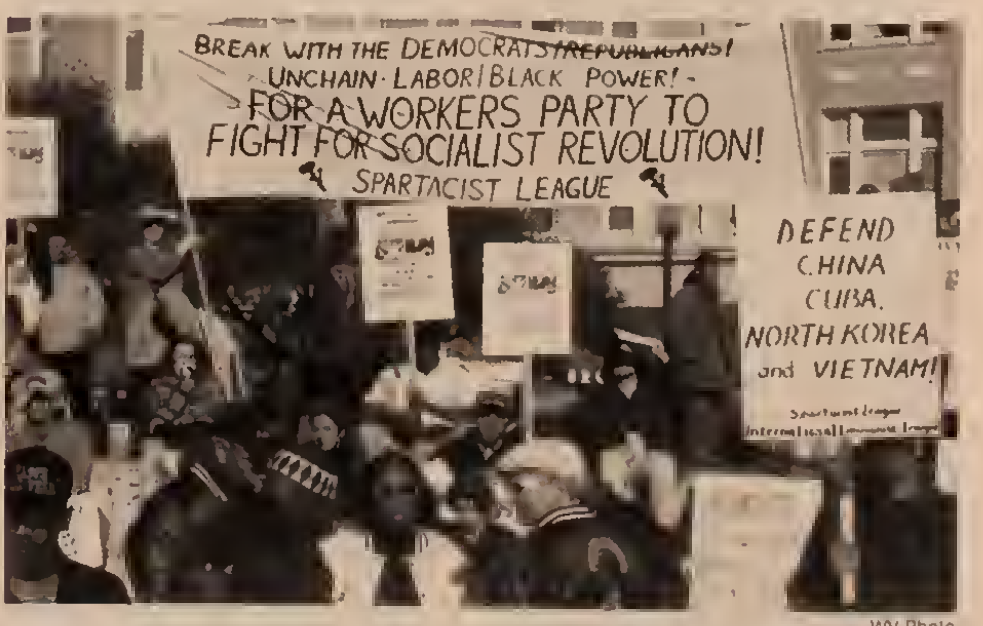

WV Photo

Oakland, 9 February 2002: Labor-centered mobilization against Patriot Act, anti-immigrant witchhunt.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 811 | 10 October 2003

Stop Bipartisan Attack on Women's Rights!

Free Abortion on Demand!

Late last week, the U.S. House of Representatives, with the support of 63 Democrats, passed a bill banning a seldom-used abortion procedure usually practiced in the second or third trimester —grotesquely and misleadingly dubbed by anti-abortion bigots as "partial-birth abortion." A similar bill was earlier passed by the Senate, and President Bush has vowed to sign the ban into law. It would be the wedge for overturning *all* abortion rights, striking a blow to the right of women in the United States to legal abortion, subjecting abortion doctors to possible prison sentences, and potentially throwing women back to the days of degradation, helplessness, fear and back-alley abortions. In fact, the bill is deliberately worded so vaguely that many obstetricians say that it could be interpreted to outlaw second- and third-trimester abortions entirely; other doctors believe even some first-trimester abortions would be rendered illegal. *The sinister assault on abortion rights must be stopped, now!*

Ominously, there has been barely a peep of protest against the reactionary attacks on abortion. What is needed are mass mobilizations, backed by the power of labor and independent of the Democrats, in defense of abortion rights. But the strategy of reliance on "pro-choice" Democrats and the courts pursued by the liberals and feminists has served to demobilize the struggle. A clear example of that was the demonstrations commemorating the 30th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision in January this year.

The most visible observance of *Roe v. Wade* was a rally of upwards of 50,000 anti-abortion bigots in Washington, D.C., who marched down Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court brandishing posters of aborted fetuses. At the Washington Monument, the reactionary horde was addressed by telephone by bigot-in-chief George Bush, who took a break from preparations for the slaughter in Iraq to praise their "devotion to the cause of life."

WV Photo

Spartacists at 1994 Bay Area protest over murder of Florida abortion doctor John Britton. Liberals, feminists demobilized struggle to defend abortion rights in favor of appeals to Democratic politicians.

The ostensible defenders of abortion rights used the days around the anniversary to advertise their capitulation in the face of the anti-abortion onslaught. As the anti-abortion mobs howled, the program director of the New York affiliate of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL), Cristina Page, joined forces with a leader of the deadly anti-abortion group Right to Life of Michigan, co-authoring an op-ed piece in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* (23 January), also published in the *New York Times*, titled: "Prolifers and Prochoicers Should Focus on Common Ground"! This is revolting. There should be no "common ground" between those committed to defending abortion rights and those committed to the enslavement of women.

NARAL, meanwhile, marked *Roe*'s anniversary by changing the organizations' name so that the word "abortion" would no longer cause offense, becoming "NARAL—Pro-Choice America." In a January 21 speech, Kate Michelman, president of NARAL—Pro-Choice America, pointed to the threat to abortion rights and remarked, "When historians write the story of this moment, they will say every trend pointed toward the end of *Roe*." This is absolutely true. *But today's rollback and threatened defeat of abortion rights has been prepared by the program of such bourgeois feminists and their supporters preaching reliance on the Democratic Party.* Those who really want to champion women's rights must wage their struggle independent of the capitalist parties, breaking free from the "family values" framework laid down by the ruling class and fighting for free abortion on demand.

The rollback of *Roe v. Wade* got its real start with Democrat Jimmy Carter, who brought the religious right into mainstream politics after the Vietnam War and signed the Hyde Amendment which

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Murderous Zionist Provocations

OCTOBER 6—Yesterday's air strike against a Palestinian camp in Syria marks yet another dangerous escalation in the Zionist state's murderous war against the Palestinian people. Though the camp was unpopulated and no serious casualties were reported, this assault deep into Syrian territory was a statement by Israel's bloody-minded rulers that they accept no bounds to their anti-Arab terror. Even more ominously, the government of right-wing Likud prime minister Ariel Sharon has renewed its threats to expel or assassinate Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat, a move which would certainly entail a massive bloodbath of Palestinians. The Israeli rulers are encouraged and emboldened by their American imperialist patrons, who have armed Israel to the hilt. The U.S. has also singled out Syria as a target of the "war on terror" and last month vetoed a Security Council resolution simply urging Israel not to harm Arafat. Today President Bush refused to condemn the Israeli air strike in Syria, instead asserting Israel's "right to defend" its "homeland." *U.S./Israel hands off Syria! Israel hands off Arafat!*

The immediate pretext for the Zionist provocations is the heinous suicide bombing of a Haifa restaurant on Saturday, killing 19 and wounding 50 others. This criminal act of indiscriminate terror, for which Islamic Jihad has claimed responsibility, is the direct—and desired—result of the Sharon government's intensifying slaughter and brutalization of the Palestinian people. It comes after a series of deadly raids over the past two weeks by Israeli forces in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jenin, site of a Zionist army massacre of Palestinian refugees last year, and the regime's announcement that the wall it is building around the West Bank will drive deep into Palestinian territory around the Zionist settlement of Ariel, dividing Arab families and separating farmers from their lands. Speaking before the latest suicide bombing, one embittered Palestinian olive farmer told the *New York Times* (4 October): "When they take your land, kill your sons, deny you food for your family, demolish your houses, and deny you any freedom of movement, what do they expect you to do?"

The Haifa bombing also underlined the symmetry of interests between the anti-Semitic, anti-woman reactionaries of Islamic Jihad and Hamas (as well as their nationalist counterparts like Al Aqsa) and the far more powerful and dangerous Zionist state terrorists and their fascistic settler auxiliaries. Both sides seek to widen the river of blood dividing the oppressed Palestinian Arabs from the Hebrew-speaking people and to poison any possibility of proletarian class unity across national lines.

Indeed, the Islamic Jihad attack was made to order for Sharon & Co. In the last week, the Israeli bourgeoisie has been confronted with a powerful strike by civil servants and port workers to protest long-planned government cuts in welfare spending. The port strike is centered in Haifa, which is, moreover, one of the few predominantly Hebrew cities with a significant Arab population. The restaurant that was struck by Islamic Jihad was co-owned by Arabs and Jews, and employed and served people from both communities. In timing the attack for a Saturday, the Jewish sabbath, the perpetrators effectively ensured that their target would

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Down With Government War on Civil Liberties!

The Bush administration's admission last week that the Patriot Act is being used in cases far removed from even its own sweeping definition of "terrorism" is a chilling confirmation that the "war on terror" is aimed against the civil liberties of the population as a whole. One Justice Department spokesman boasted, "There are many provisions in the Patriot Act that can be used in the general criminal law" (*New York Times*, 28 September). The *Times* article reports, "The government is using its expanded authority under the far-reaching law to investigate suspected drug traffickers, white-collar criminals, blackmailers, child pornographers, money launderers, spies and even corrupt foreign leaders" in "many hundreds of nonterrorism cases."

A measure of the breadth of the government's potential hit list is the Feds' recent announcement of a centralized "terrorist watch list" of over 100,000 persons, a throwback to the McCarthyite Communist Index and Security Index, which designated nearly 30,000 leftists to be rounded up and placed in detention camps during a "national emergency." During the protests against the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the government used a "no fly list" to prevent activists from attending demonstrations against the war. In recent weeks, the government has detained under suspicion of espionage at least three men—all of them Muslim—who were acting as chaplains or interpreters for the hundreds rounded up at the Guantánamo base in Cuba.

AP

San Francisco, January 6: Protest against registration and detention of immigrants.

As is stressed in the following speech by Partisan Defense Committee spokesman Paul Cooperstein at a September 25 Spartacist League forum in New York City, the principal targets of the Patriot Act and other such measures are immigrants, minorities, labor and all political opponents of racist U.S. imperialism. This was underlined by reports last week that the government is now using the Patriot Act in renewed efforts to deport two of the Los Angeles 8, Palestinian activists who have been in the state's cross hairs for 16 years for speaking out against Zionist repression. The vendetta against the L.A. 8 violates multiple constitutional rights, from First Amendment free speech protections to the prohibition on prosecutions using ex post facto laws. ***Hands off the L.A. 8! Down with the anti-immigrant witchhunt!***

* * *

I'm sure many of you noticed that we've just had about a month of the John Ashcroft traveling medicine show, a tour of the U.S. by the attorney general to promote support for the increasingly widely despised police state measures, centered on the Patriot Act. That they feel compelled to do this, to justify a law that was passed by Congress nearly unanimously, is quite striking. And, like so much of what this administration does, if it weren't so ominous it would be quite humorous. As opposition grows, Bush steps forward to call for even greater repressive powers such as those proposed in "Patriot II" which would include a provision to strip citizenship from those who get in the way of Washington's imperial designs. In the administration's typically arrogant and ignorant way, they attempt to win over public support by touring possibly their most unappetizing figure—a man who among other things built a replica of the Statue of Liberty out of barbed wire and covers up the breasts of statues in the Justice Department when he gives speeches there. And who is this public whose hearts and minds Ashcroft seeks to win support for unrestrained police power—gatherings of cops and prosecutors!

Ashcroft's primary target in this tour has been those sweet little librarians who belong in Norman Rockwell paintings—their crime is warning library users that the Feds are monitoring what they read. So desperate is Ashcroft, an open lover of the Confederacy, he's even taken to invoking Abraham Lincoln as authority for the need for these police state measures.

This may have won Jon Stewart and the *Daily Show* an Emmy, but this is serious stuff. The Patriot Act and the other edicts mark a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. Using the September 11 attacks as a pretext, the government rounded up some 1,200 immigrants from Islamic countries and enacted the Patriot Act and a host of executive orders under which the government's secret police have vastly expanded authority to tap your phone, search your home, scour your financial records, interrogate your librarian and place you under arrest without probable cause that a crime has been committed. On top of this, the Defense Department has plans for a massive computer system which would allow the Feds to access financial, medical, communication and travel records of everyone living in or entering the U.S. In other words, the Bush administration will know what books and periodicals you read, what music you listen to, what movies you watch, what cities and countries you travel to, who you sleep with and what type of contraception you use.

Now the administration is creating a "counterterrorism" center to develop a master watch list of 100,000 "terrorism suspects." If you think this doesn't concern you, think again. In justifying its police state plans, the government's spokesmen rant that "terrorist sleepers" lead outwardly normal lives—students, businessmen, parents and soccer dads—i.e., everybody is suspect.

As we've pointed out from the beginning, while initially directed at immigrants from largely Islamic countries, these measures are ultimately to be used

Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War

TROTSKY

LENIN

Since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 and imperialist triumphalism over the "death of communism," there has been a resurgence of interest in the petty-bourgeois ideology of anarchism as a seemingly "radical" alternative to Marxism. Yet when anarchism was tested as a political program during the Spanish Revolution, as Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky pointed out in 1937, the Anarchists of the FAI and the CNT trade-union federation helped to prop up the forces of bourgeois "democratic" counterrevolution, justifying this treachery in the name of opposition to all "dictatorships," including the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In and of itself, this self-justification that "we did not seize power not because we were unable but because we did not wish to, because we were against every kind of dictatorship," and the like, contains an irrevocable condemnation of anarchism as an utterly antirevolutionary doctrine. To renounce the conquest of power is voluntarily to leave the power with those who wield it, the exploiters. The essence of every revolution consisted and consists in putting a new class in power, thus enabling it to realize its own program in life. It is impossible to wage war and to reject victory. It is impossible to lead the masses towards insurrection without preparing for the conquest of power....

The renunciation of conquest of power inevitably throws every workers' organization into the swamp of reformism and turns it into a toy of the bourgeoisie; it cannot be otherwise in view of the class structure of society. In opposing the *goal*, the conquest of power, the Anarchists could not in the end fail to oppose the *means*, the revolution. The leaders of the CNT and FAI not only helped the bourgeoisie hold on to the shadow of power in July 1936; they also helped it to reestablish bit by bit what it had lost at one stroke. In May 1937, they sabotaged the uprising of the workers and thereby saved the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Thus anarchism, which wished merely to be anti-political, proved in reality to be antirevolutionary, and in the more critical moments—counterrevolutionary.

—Leon Trotsky, "The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning," 17 December 1937, reprinted in *The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)* (Pathfinder, 1973)

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NEW YORK CITY

Amina Lawal Freed!

Nigeria

Fighters for women's rights around the world were relieved and heartened by the September 25 acquittal of Amina Lawal, the Nigerian woman sentenced to death by stoning for adultery. "I've never been this afraid," said the 31-year-old single mother as she entered the courthouse for her final appeal. Amina's plight came to symbolize the oppression suffered by women worldwide at the hands of religious and state authorities.

Shortly after her daughter Wasila's birth, Amina Lawal was dragged from her home in a nighttime raid by fundamentalist vigilantes. While the man accused of fathering her baby was allowed to plead innocent and was acquitted, she had no such option. At her sentencing in March 2002, Wasila was the only evidence an Islamic *sharia* court in northern Katsina state needed to convict her mother of the "crime" of sex outside marriage. Amina was sentenced to be buried up to her neck in sand and stoned to death. Joining an international outcry after Amina's appeal was denied in August 2002, we raised the call in "Save Amina Lawal!" (*WV* No. 787, 20 September 2002): "*The workers movement throughout the world must mobilize in protest action to stop this hideous execution!*"

Following Amina Lawal's sentencing last year, the Brazilian and Italian governments both offered her asylum. The imperialist press was filled with denunciations of Nigeria; and the European Union, the U.S. State Department and the Canadian government all joined in condemning this "gross violation of human rights." What hypocrisy coming from the imperialist powers who in their own countries promote attacks on women's rights, from the axing of social programs to the U.S. Congress' current anti-abortion legislation! As we noted in *WV* No. 787:

> "Barbaric practices oppressive to women are not confined to Nigeria or the Islamic world. In all societies based on private property, various forms of oppression have been meted out by all religions to buttress women's subjugation.... In all these class societies, the central source of women's oppression is the institution of the family, a vehicle through which property is transmitted from one generation to the next and the mechanism for raising new generations of workers.... The family is used to regiment society for the powers that be, instilling subservience to authority and reinforcing religious obscurantism."

For years, Nigeria has been racked by ethnic and religious conflicts. Over 10,000 people have been killed in the last four years alone. Since the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo, a "born again" Christian, allowed the imposition of *sharia* law in the north in 1999, women in particular have faced increasing repression, from being forced to wear the *hijab* headscarf in Kano state to medieval punishments like the 100 lashes one teenage girl received for the "crime" of premarital sex. Others face the surgical removal of eyes or amputation of hands for minor crimes.

Amina Lawal (center) with her daughter Wasila and one of her attorneys at September 25 court hearing.

Reuters

Since Amina Lawal was acquitted on technicalities, the door is left open for more women to be sentenced to death for violating Islamic moral strictures; she was not the only person facing death by stoning in Nigeria. Three other alleged adulterers have been acquitted, and now a young couple of ex-lovers, Fatima Usman and Ahmadu Ibrahim, are appealing their death sentence for adultery in Niger state. On September 23, a 21-year-old man in Bauchi state was condemned to death for "sodomy" after he confessed to homosexual acts; other cases are pending. Homosexuality, like women's sexuality, is seen as a threat to the patriarchal family. We stand firmly for the absolute non-interference of the state into consensual sexual relations. ***For the separation of religion and state! For women's liberation through socialist revolution!*** ■

against the labor movement, blacks and opponents of U.S. imperialism. When New York transit workers voted to go on strike last year, the media screamed they were launching a "jihad," and the strike-breaking Taylor Law was invoked. On April 7, based on so-called intelligence information, riot-equipped cops at the Oakland docks fired on longshoremen and antiwar protesters, including supporters of the Spartacist League, with wooden bullets and concussion grenades.

Much of what the government seeks to do is seen particularly in the case of Jose Padilla. An American citizen, Padilla was arrested in May 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare Airport and held as a "material witness" for a month before the Bush administration declared that he had fantasies of setting off a radioactive "dirty bomb." So they declared him an enemy combatant and shipped him off to a military brig, where he remains today without access to an attorney, without charges being filed, without any prospect of a hearing or trial to challenge the accusations against him—the very essence of what we were taught in seventh grade as due process of law.

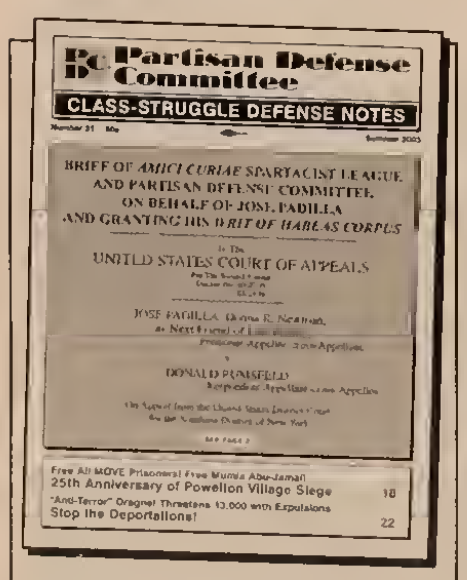
This is a truly dangerous precedent. It represents the government's assertion of the right to disappear people as well as a frontal attack on the very right of citizenship itself. This is the Dred Scott case of today—a declaration that American citizens have no rights the government is bound to respect.

The SL and PDC filed a friend of the court brief in the federal court of appeals on Padilla's behalf. I would urge all of you to pick up a copy of the brief, printed here in the PDC's *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. We point out that "the Government seeks to institutionalize in the American justice system the arbitrary deprivation of rights that are the hallmarks of right-wing dictatorships propped up around the world by U.S. imperialism." We point out that the "war on terrorism" is not a war in a military sense at all but a political pretext to justify the vast enhancement of the repressive powers of the capitalist state.

The brief traces the evolution of the democratic rights under attack today, won through centuries of struggle, including the Civil War that smashed slavery and the pitched battles that gave birth to the organized labor movement in this country. It describes as well the history of government lies and slander to justify its wars abroad and repression at home, including pinning the terrorist label on leftist political opponents—a label that left 38 Panthers dead and countless others imprisoned on frame-up charges for decades, among them death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

This brief is critical reading for defenders of democratic rights, workers, fighters for black freedom, radical youth and all who seek to oppose the current all-sided attack on democratic rights. It illustrates that under capitalism no democratic right is secure and, in reviewing the history of repression, that in times the rulers call "national emergencies" you can't fight repression with Democrats. This is a critical lesson right now. With a good portion of the population troubled by the Patriot Act, the Democrats have made Ashcroft a campaign issue. But to say that their opposition is superficial would be a gross understatement. The Democrats voted overwhelmingly in support of the law, were the moving forces for the Homeland Security Department and have made as their primary campaign issue Bush's failings on "homeland security." Many of the Patriot Act's provisions build on laws enacted under Clinton and proposals he sought but was unable to implement.

We have continuously emphasized that what the government gets away with will be determined by the level of social struggle. We have called on the multiracial labor movement to mobilize in defense of immigrants—calling for full citizenship rights for immigrants—and in opposition to the capitalist rulers' phony war on terrorism. A year ago February the PDC and Labor Black League initiated a united-front demonstration of 300 in Oakland—centered on the powerful longshoremen's union—in defense of immigrants and in opposition to the Patriot and Maritime Security Acts. This mobilization, like the anti-fascist mobilizations we have organized independent of the capitalist Democrats, is an expression of our determination to act as a tribune of the oppressed and a small but significant step in building the revolutionary party that will lead the workers to power and consign the racist capitalist state to the scrap heap. ■



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Stop Expulsions of School Girls Wearing the Headscarf!

Racism and Islamic Fundamentalism in France

The following article is translated from Le Bolchévik *No. 163 (Spring 2003) published by the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League. The article is a polemic against the minority in Lutte Ouvrière (LO), a long-time opposition grouping in LO that publishes a regular column in their press.*

LE BOLCHEVIK

APRIL 18—On March 13, around 80 percent of the teachers at the Martinière-Duchère high school in Lyon went on a one-day strike to protest against a woman student's wearing of a colored bandanna (described as a "headscarf"). Once before, in December 2002, most of the teachers had refused to allow this student into their classes and had called on the bourgeois state to expel the girl wearing the headscarf. The teachers' spokesman declared: "We have the moral duty to try to recall what secularism means. If we let this go, tomorrow we will be encouraging acts of intimidation by fundamentalist movements, which will try to weigh in concerning the curriculum" (*Le Monde*, 15 March).

Since the conflict over wearing the Islamic headscarf in schools exploded in 1989, "secularism" has been cynically manipulated to cover up anti-Islamic bigotry in the name of the "values of the Republic." The separation of church and state and "secular" education are cherished gains, rooted in the French Revolution, which must be defended. However, these principles are completely ***deformed*** when they are used to attack these Muslim girls who wear the headscarf. It is nothing but the worst hypocrisy for this capitalist class, which uses every kind of backwardness and discrimination in order to maintain the capitalist system, to speak in the name of "secularism." The principle of secularism derives from the struggle to ***defend freedom of expression*** and to tear society from the clutches of the Catholic church. In France, Islam is a religion of the ***oppressed***, a religion of the ghettos, which accepts segregation. The main enemy here is not Muslims but the racist, anti-working-class, anti-women French state. We defend the girls who wear the headscarf against the reactionary bourgeois state and against those who call on the bourgeois state to expel them. Meanwhile, the headscarf is oppressive and represents a reactionary social program of confining women in the family, in the home and in a position of servitude. Nevertheless, expelling these Muslim girls can only result in further reinforcing their isolation and oppression.

One "left" group well known since 1989 for its ***support*** to the expulsion of young girls wearing the headscarf is Lutte Ouvrière (LO). In 1994 LO even organized a counterdemonstration in Lille against students who were striking in order to defend 19 girls who had been expelled from school (*Libération*, 7 October 1994). Characteristically, LO ignores racial and sexual oppression, falsely arguing that struggles against these forms of oppression "divide" the workers. In this way, LO capitulates to social backwardness in the French proletariat and glorifies the working class as it is, instead of fighting as Leninists for the working class to achieve a higher level of consciousness in order to fight all forms of oppression and exploitation in bourgeois society and open the road to a socialist future.

AFP photos

Above: Protest against ban on headscarves in public schools in Lille, 1994. Below: November 2002 Paris protest demanding papers for all undocumented immigrants.

As for the LO minority, they wrote an article entitled "Does Radical Islam Challenge Imperialism?" (*Lutte de Classe*, January-February 2003), which falsely seeks to present LO (or at least its minority) as the best fighters against Islamic fundamentalism, and polemicizes on this basis against the rest of the left. The LO minority uses the method of the Big Lie: they make a false amalgam between, on the one hand, the well-known opposition of the Ligue Trotskyste de France to Islamic fundamentalism and all forms of religious backwardness and, on the other hand, the Cliffites' cynical enthusiasm for Islamic fundamentalism which they present as supposedly opposed to Western imperialism. Thus, the minority writes:

> "Since the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism in Algeria and the affair with the veil in France (the expelling of three veiled students in Creil in October 1989), a debate has taken place within the far left concerning the attitude to take toward Islamic movements. Some far-left groups, notably the LTF (Ligue Trotskyste de France) and the International Socialist current (...in France today, Socialisme par en Bas) or even Workers Power have explained that state racism was solely responsible for the defiance of veiled students and that Islamic fundamentalism can be the expression of national or community feelings of Muslims in France which it is necessary to defend against the state and school.... As if, for these veiled girls, the main enemy is secular school!"

The fact that the Cliffites ***support*** reactionary Islamic forces is nothing new. They hailed the Islamic "revolution" in Iran, which threw leftist militants in prison and imposed the veil on women. They proclaimed that the oppressive *chador* was a "symbol of resistance," and they fully supported the anti-women *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. In this, they were united with Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USec), to which the LO minority endlessly seeks to cozy up. The leaders of the USec saluted Islamic reaction in the streets of London and Paris (even chanting ***Allah akbar***!) even as their supporters in Iran languished in Khomeini's prisons. In sharp contrast with this criminal and disastrous tailism by the "far left," we fought on the basis of the slogans "Down with the Shah! No support to the mullahs!" We published our propaganda in Farsi in order to win Iranian militants to breaking with the disastrous course of subordinating the workers movement to Khomeini. In 1979, we launched, under the slogan "No to the veil," an international campaign in which a woman comrade of Muslim origin carried out an international speaking tour to address the left and the workers movement against the enslavement of women by Islamic reaction.

We in the LTF and the ICL have always been the greatest opponents of Muslim fundamentalism and *every form* of obscurantism and religious reaction. We also defend secularism, but a "secular" state is based on the idea that the state ***should not get involved with people's personal beliefs***. The principle of "secularism" is grossly deformed by the Catholic majority in France to oppress the Muslim minority, and Lutte Ouvrière sings the same tune. In so-called "secular" France, the state partly subsidizes the private schools, including Catholic schools, and Catholic chaplaincies can be opened in ***public*** junior and senior high schools. Where there is so-called "separation" between the state and organized religion, now [interior minister] Sarkozy has set up a "French Council of the Muslim Religion" to directly involve the French state in running the mosques in order to better use them to more closely control the *banlieues* [working-class and minority suburbs]. According to *Le Monde* (1 April), Sarkozy "asked the imams to call for 'calm and serenity' in the context of the war in Iraq." Before the French Revolution, one spoke of an alliance between the sword and the cross, but in the *banlieues*, the French state uses the alliance of the billy club and the Koran in order to better police youth.

The increasing expulsions of Muslim women who wear the headscarf from schools (and the workplace) are an integral part of broader attacks which target immigrants in French society. The bourgeoisie took advantage of the Iraq war to massively deport *sans-papiers* [undocumented immigrants] in charter flights. Vigipirate, which was put in place during the first Gulf War and reinforced several times since September 11, 2001 and again during the second Iraq war, aims to criminalize all immigrants, especially Maghrebins [North Africans], as potential "terrorists." This campaign of daily terror divides the working class by making them believe that the enemy is the Maghrebin co-workers of French workers and not the French capitalist class. We say: ***Down with Vigipirate!*** The workers movement must fight for full citizenship rights for ***all*** immigrants!

Even a march of women under the slogan "Neither whores nor submissive women" [a reference to the perceived alternatives of accepting seclusion or being considered "whores"] was manipulated in order to step up repression in the *banlieues*. Courageous women participated in this march. They were rebelling against the particularly oppressive conditions for women of immigrant origin. They are rejected by racist French society and also crushed by the oppression of religious traditions, arranged marriages, domestic slavery in the home and a stifling "modesty" brutally imposed on them by their "older brothers." The young women who free themselves from these constraints are often called whores and face social disgrace, the degrading violence of gang rapes or even death. The "Neither whores nor submissive women" march began in Vitry in memory of Sohane, a young woman who had been burned alive, and it passed through 24

cities, culminating in a demonstration of 20,000 people in Paris on March 8, International Women's Day.

In all struggles against oppression, it is necessary and fundamental to have a clear understanding of class society and the bourgeois state. As the "Neither whores nor submissive women" march did not orient toward the proletariat as the agent of revolutionary change in society, it finished by providing a "progressive" veneer to the campaign of cop terror by the French capitalist state in the poor neighborhoods and the largely minority *banlieues*. The "Neither whores nor submissive women" march was led by SOS-Racisme, which is allied with the Socialist Party (PS) (a founder of SOS-Racisme, Julien Dray, *wrote* the last racist, repressive laws passed under the Jospin government). "Neither whores nor submissive women" reinforced a media campaign aimed at depicting all Muslim men as anti-women criminals, when it is these North African men who suffer the most from the police violence and repression in the *banlieues*. In reaction, some young men published their own leaflets in Asnières under the title "Neither Machos, nor Pimps." One youth explained: "The problem is this amalgam between ghetto youth and rapists. We're already labeled delinquents. That's enough, we've had it!" (*Libération*, 6 March). On the last day of the march, on International Women's Day, Prime Minister Raffarin invited the marchers to Matignon—not exactly the "normal" place for ending a protest march in Paris. Normally, they are policed by riot cops who come down particularly hard on *banlieue* youth who dare to march in Paris! Television news showed women marchers demanding that the government intervene without further delay to protect women in the *banlieues*. The [Gaullist] UMP spoke of creating a crime of sexual harassment precisely under this pretext, since "the macho culture of the *banlieues* has greatly influenced our society" (*Le Monde*, 9-10 March).

It is criminal to sidetrack the anger and courage of these young women into calls on the class enemy, the bourgeois state, to protect them! It is not with calls for more police repression in the ghettos that one can resolve the pathology of the ghettos, which are hit by the economic crisis and where social backwardness is encouraged by the *systematic* segregation of minority communities! As we wrote in "Women and Immigration in France" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 57, Winter 2002-2003):

> "This national isolation is created by the indifference to these questions on the part of the major left parties and trade unions. While the Communist Party [PCF] in particular engages in a certain amount of face-saving social work in municipalities it runs, sometimes assisting desperate individuals, they no less than the Socialists are on the wrong side of the fight to mobilize the whole of the powerful workers movement to act in defense of immigrants and in defense of women. The political abdication of a 'leadership' that won't fight on behalf of the specially oppressed means weak unions that don't defend the interests of any of their members and a political climate dominated by racist arguments in the mouths of both the right and the 'left'."

Le Bolchévik

February 15 Paris antiwar protest. Sign reads: "Immigrant Women Workers: Triply Oppressed—Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!"

In the current climate of witchhunts against immigrants and especially Maghrebins, Lutte Ouvrière cannot even bring itself to oppose the stepped-up repression of Vigipirate. This is not new. In the middle of the security campaign by the Jospin government in 2001, they even supported the cop demonstrations (see our article in *Le Bolchévik* No. 158, Winter 2001-2002). Now, in its article on "radical Islam" in *Lutte de Classe*, the minority seeks to provide a cover for the majority by referring once to opposition to "Vigipirate." It is also new that the minority's article describes the racist campaigns of the 1980s: the Mauroy government (which the PCF participated in) indeed denounced in 1982-83 striking auto workers as being manipulated by the ayatollahs in order to break the strike. However, LO pretends that the situation will change if only the workers' militancy increases: "What is certain is that the youth in revolt in the *banlieues* need perspectives" because there are no perspectives in bourgeois society, and therefore it is possible that "part of the youth turn toward the far right and part toward the Islamic fundamentalists. That would be catastrophic. Things have not gotten to that point, and the entire work of revolutionaries must aim at creating a situation in which workers struggles spread and various factions of the working class and its youth are not divided" (*Lutte de Classe*). The LO minority has some nerve giving lessons on "divisions" in the working class when they put the far right (that is, Le Pen's fascist goons) on the same level as their victims, who out of despair turn to Islam! The development of religion, this "opium of the people," is the result of despair and the absence of any perspective in the face of massive unemployment and segregation. What is necessary is to fight to raise the level of political consciousness in order to mobilize *all* the workers *against* racism and the anti-women and anti-gay bigotry that divide them, under the leadership of a revolutionary vanguard party, a Leninist party which is a tribune of the people.

Despite their attempt to present LO as the most consistent fighter against Islamic fundamentalism, the minority "forgets" to mention the role that LO itself played by *refusing* to fight against Islamic reaction in the world for the past 20 years, from Iran to Afghanistan. In Iran at the end of the 1970s, there was enormous social upheaval and struggles by the working class, the left and the petty bourgeoisie against the tyrannical, U.S.-supported Shah. However, opposition to the Shah was politically dominated by reactionary Islamic fundamentalists, led by Khomeini. At the time, nearly the entire left internationally supported Khomeini, the anti-women fundamentalist and, later, killer of communists. LO documents effectively the LCR's prostration before the ayatollahs during the Iranian revolution of 1978. At the time, LO recognized the reactionary character of the Iranian Shi'ite clergy, but they refused "to directly go up against the current leadership at the level of slogans and immediate objectives" (*Lutte de Classe*, 8 January 1979). Above all, the minority "forgets" to mention the main thing that fomented religious reaction in the world: the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union.

Islam, Women and the Counterrevolution in the USSR

In the ex-Soviet Union, across East Europe, in Central Asia—where previously there had been deformed workers states, where capitalism had been overthrown—the counterrevolutionary reintroduction of capitalism in 1989-1992 meant that women were thrown back at every level. Birth control pills and abortion were accessible and *free* for East German women, but they have lost those gains in reunified capitalist Germany. In countries like Poland, today again dominated by the Catholic church thanks to the Solidarność counterrevolution of 1989, women have practically no access to abortion. Out of despair, women from the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and elsewhere in East Europe who previously could have been scientists or doctors, today survive only through prostitution. With the withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan in 1989, Afghan women who had been trained as nurses and teachers by the Soviets were abandoned to the worst pillaging at the hands of the Northern Alliance, the Taliban and other backward Afghan forces supported by the imperialists against the Soviet Union. For the past ten years, the sun has not shone on Afghan women, veiled from head to toe and treated worse than cattle. Despite all the imperialist hypocrisy about "Afghan women" at the same time that they carried out a war against Afghanistan in 2002, it was the imperialists of the world and their reformist waterboys in the workers movement internationally (and LO played their part in this) who opposed the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and who applauded or acquiesced in counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, and who have the blood of Afghan women on their hands.

The superiority of the Soviet economy can be clearly seen with regard to Afghanistan. A unique case in modern history, the rights of women constituted a central question in the Afghanistan war in the 1980s. After taking power in an April 1978 coup, pro-Moscow intellectuals and army officers of the PDPA tried to implement some minimal reforms in order to bring Afghanistan closer to the 20th century: land distribution, liberation of women from wearing the *burka*, reduction of the bride price. Such minimal democratic reforms triggered an explosion in this country, which was and is terribly backward without the slightest industry and with largely feudal conditions. Tribal chiefs and landowners declared a holy war (*jihad*) against the PDPA, skinning teachers alive for the "crime" of teaching young girls to read. When Moscow sent Red Army troops to Kabul following the Afghan government's request, American presidents Jimmy Carter (a Democrat) and then Reagan (a Republican) supported the anti-women *mujahedin* against the USSR. [Socialist Party president] Mitterrand's France also gave support to the anti-Soviet crusade in Afghanistan. We in the ICL said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!" The Soviet bureaucracy did not intervene in Afghanistan to make a revolution, but simply to defend the Soviet border threatened by the imperialists. From the beginning of 1980, we warned that the Stalinist bureaucracy in Moscow could withdraw the troops from Afghanistan in order to appease the imperialists and promote an illusory "peaceful coexistence" with them. Gorbachev's cowardly withdrawal from Afghanistan, in the face of the imperialist campaign to supposedly help the Afghan people, opened the road to counterrevolution in Poland, East Germany and, finally, in the USSR.

In the 1980s, the entire "Trotskyist" fake left, in one way or another, took a side *against* the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Today, in *Lutte de Classe*, the LO minority insists that Bin Laden, et al. were the creatures of the CIA in order to fight against the Soviet Union, but they disappear the fact that they *opposed* the only force which opposed Bin Laden & Co. at the time: the Red Army. They refused to take the side of social progress against imperialism, comparing the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan to that of the imperialists in Vietnam (*Lutte de Classe*, 7 July 1980). In *In Defense of Marxism*, Trotsky chastised those who confuse the expansion of the workers state with imperialist aggression:

> "In contemporary literature, at least Marxist literature, imperialism is understood to mean the *expansionist policy of finance capital*.... To employ the term 'imperialism' for the foreign policy of the Kremlin...means simply to identify the policy of the Bonapartist bureaucracy with the policy of monopolistic capitalism on the basis that both one and the other utilize military force for expansion. Such

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Franklin/Magnum

Women in 1980s Afghanistan took up arms to defend social progress against CIA-backed *mujahedin*.

Le Bolchévik

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Young Spartacus

Exchange with NEFAC Open City Anarchists

Trotskyism vs. Anarchism on the State and Revolution

2 July 2003

To Workers Vanguard:

In your May 9, 2003 issue you have a discussion of our leaflet Anarchists Against the War, which was produced for the February 15 antiwar demonstrations. We are the Open City Anarchist Collective of NEFAC (Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists) in New York City. You accuse us of Pressure Politics in Militant Clothing. This is our response.

Taking your last argument first, you say that the workers movement needs to be organized and led, specifically by your type of party. NEFAC is part of the tendency within international anarchism which believes that anarchists should build an organization around a revolutionary program. This is called Platformism. We are a democratic federation of collectives. We are working to increase our unity in action on the basis of programmatic and theoretical agreement and collective responsibility of each to all. We believe that such a revolutionary organization should work inside broader, mass, organizations to fight for a working class anarchist program. Our aim, however, is not to become the new rulers but to call on workers to form mass organizations (federation of councils) to replace the state (which is what should have been done in the Spanish Revolution of the thirties). This was explained in our leaflet.

What we are against is a centralized, bureaucratic, topdown party machine, whose form prefigures a new centralized, bureaucratic, state. Following Lenin and Trotsky, your aim is to create a centralized party which will rule a centralized state which will manage a centralized economy. The result must be, and has been, monstrous state-capitalisms, economically inefficient in the extreme, which have murdered tens of millions of workers and peasants.

You seek to defend the former Soviet Union by pointing out the suffering which has fallen on its people since its collapse. That suffering is real, but why did it collapse? Was it overthrown by a US invasion or a CIA plot? No, while Western pressure was continuous, Russian state capitalism collapsed from its own, internal, weaknesses, its decades of economic stagnation and decay. It was the Stalinist state capitalism of the Soviet Union which has resulted in the present stage of mass misery. To return to that system, as you wish, would be no solution.

You charge that we are merely for pressure politics, as in our participation in the Feb. 15 antiwar demonstration. As you say, revolutionaries cannot work out a common program with nonrevolutionaries against war. But, of course, we did no such thing. After all, our only agreement with the liberal and Stalinist leadership of the demonstration was a negative one, that we were against the war, and, following this, that we were for a demonstration against the war. This is not exactly a common program against war. It was a temporary, limited, and practical de facto agreement for one day. What we did, in New York City, was to organize a Red-and-Black contingent of pro-working class anarchists which marched within the labor contingent. We put out the leaflet you cite, which denounced the Democrats and the union bureaucrats, called for revolution against capitalism and the state, explained what anarchism was, and advocated increased class struggle and unrest by the military ranks. To call this a common program with liberals is bizarre.

G. P. Goldshtein

May 1920: Lenin in Moscow addressing Red Army troops leaving for Polish front. Defending Soviet workers state required organizing and fighting for world socialist revolution.

What did the Spartacists do which was different from what we did? According to your statement, you also organized contingents to march in the demonstrations, under your slogans. By building a part of the demonstrations (your so-called Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents) you were building the demonstration. You urged people to participate in the demonstration by joining your contingent. Whatever you were doing in your sectarian heads, in material reality (in your actual behavior) you were participating in and building the antiwar demonstrations in a de facto coalition with everyone else who was marching—while raising your own program. This was the right thing to do, and is what we did also.

We wrote, "To limit their wars, we must put pressure on these states. To end their wars, we must end all states." You call this a "two-stage program" and fly off into never-never land by saying that this means "an appeal to the good conscience of the capitalists." Actually it says the exact opposite: the only way to win even limited reforms is to build a militant mass movement from below which threatens the capitalists with revolution. In fact, the memory of the anti-Vietnam war movement (combined with the Vietnamese struggle) had limited the ability of the US to wage war due to what they call the Vietnam Syndrome (popular hatred of war). This was, they hope, finally eroded by September 11. Your criticism sounds like you do not think that it is possible to win even temporary and limited reforms, which of course is not what you believe.

Our leaflet said, "We hope the US is defeated in its aggression." You agree with this and try to counterpose it to the NEFAC slogan, "No War Between Nations, No Peace Between Classes!" Actually there is no contradiction between support for the workers and peasants of Iraq fighting against the US capitalists and a class struggle, anti-nationalist, position (granted that slogans cannot express all the complexities of a political analysis). We called for the defeat of the US (which implies the victory of the Iraqis), but did not use the explicit slogan of Victory to Iraq. As an immediate slogan, this would not have made much sense when the mass of Iraqis hated Hussein's dictatorship, for good reasons, and did not want to fight for it. The Kurds in the north were actually fighting on the side of the US (unfortunately) and the Shiites in the south were holding off largely because they feared that the US would not overthrow Hussein, as it had not in 1991. (But now that Saddam Hussein is gone, we can expect increased conflict between the Iraqi workers and peasants and the US state.) In any case, our primary job in the US was to make crystal clear our opposition to US imperialism—which NEFAC has done.

Open City Anarchist Collective
of NEFAC-NYC

***Young Spartacus* replies:**

We welcome the opportunity to continue the exchange with the Open City Anarchist Collective because it has provoked broader interest among anarchists and at its heart is the question: what methods will lead to the abolition of the state and creation of an egalitarian, classless society?

Anarchists view revolution as a transcendent act that in one stroke does away with all the material inequalities and cultural rubbish inherited from the past. Marxists understand that a classless society cannot be willed into being; it has to be prepared through eliminating material scarcity. We fight to mobilize the working class—the revolutionary class created by capitalism—to smash the bourgeois state, with the recognition that workers revolution will only open the road to a classless society; it cannot in and of itself achieve it. That's why we seek to replace bourgeois class rule with workers rule, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The socialist revolution wrests industry, banks, transportation, etc. from the bourgeoisie and places them in the hands of society as a whole. Through eliminating the anarchy of production for profit, economic planning under a workers state will raise the level of productive forces and eliminate the basis for social inequality. This must be the joint enterprise of the world proletariat and is the only way to eliminate the state and create a society based on "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." We advocate a state that is different from any previous state in history in that it is an instrument of the toiling masses and, from its inception, begins to wither away.

All modern experience shows that it is fatuous to expect the capitalist class and its partisans—be they reformist, liberal or reactionary—to give up their tremendous power and wealth without a bitter fight. For the bourgeoisie, expropriation signals the loss of its "right" to extort profit, interest and rent through the blood and sweat of working people. The working class needs its own state to defeat the inevitable attempts at counterrevolution and to effect the economic transformation of society. As the revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg observed:

> "It is impossible to imagine that a transformation as formidable as the passage from capitalist society to socialist society can be realized in one happy act.... The socialist transformation supposes a long and stubborn struggle, in the course of which, it is quite probable, the proletariat will be repulsed more than once."
>
> —Rosa Luxemburg, *Reform or Revolution* (1900)

Open City's letter drips with hostility to the Soviet degenerated workers state.

It is inconsequential for the anarchists that the destruction of the world's first workers state was a historic disaster for working people all over the world, not least for the suffering masses in Russia and the other former Soviet republics. The world is now a far more dangerous place; no longer challenged by Soviet military might, the U.S. imperialists run roughshod over semicolonial peoples from the Balkans to the Persian Gulf.

Open City sees in the Soviet Union only a "centralized, bureaucratic, state" and "monstrous state-capitalism." In this, Open City follows in the footsteps of the late, nominally Trotskyist (but actually New Leftist) Revolutionary Socialist League, some of whose former members are now in Open City. From Karl Kautsky in Lenin's time to the reformist International Socialist Organization today, "theories" of state capitalism have proven to be vehicles for a fraudulent neutrality behind which lurks the appetite to support one's "own" bourgeoisie in its crusade against the workers states.

Decentralization: Recipe for Disaster

Open City condemns the "centralized, bureaucratic, state" and sneers at the Bolshevik party as a "centralized, bureaucratic, topdown party machine." They see "centralism" as an evil in itself, irrespective of the class forces involved. This is an old debate between Marxism and anarchism which has gone under the rubric of different terms in different periods: authority vs. autonomy, leadership vs. spontaneity, centralism vs. federalism.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, who first coined the term "anarchy" in 1840, envisaged a society of more or less equal small-scale property owners, reflecting the views of the artisan layer which was then being ruined by large-scale industrial capitalism. Anarchists believe that communist society can be based on inherent human goodwill (see Spartacist pamphlet, *Marxism vs. Anarchism*). But as Marx noted in his classic polemic, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847): "Proudhon does not know that all history is nothing but a continuous transformation of human nature." A socialist transformation becomes possible only with the emergence of an industrial economy, originally a product of capitalist development. In order for the proletariat in power to eliminate scarcity, centralism is essential, as Friedrich Engels explained in his polemic against anarchism, "On Authority" (1873):

> "On examining the economic, industrial and agricultural conditions which form the basis of present-day bourgeois society, we find that they tend more and more to replace isolated action by combined action of individuals. Modern industry with its big factories and mills, where hundreds of workers supervise complicated machines driven by steam, has superseded the small workshops of the separate producers; the carriages and wagons of the highways have been substituted by railway trains.... Everywhere combined action, the complication of processes dependent upon each other, displaces independent action by individuals. But whoever mentions combined action speaks of organisation; now, is it possible to have organisation without authority?...
>
> "Wanting to abolish authority in large-scale industry is tantamount to wanting to abolish industry itself, to destroy the power loom in order to return to the spinning wheel."

In its original leaflet, "Anarchists Against the War," Open City advocates replacing capitalism with "networks of self-governing worker and consumer co-operatives." But such "networks" are utterly incapable of running a modern world economy, which is much more complex and integrated than when Engels was writing. Who is going to coordinate, control and make decisions about the power grid, water supply, telecommunications, air transport, etc.? Anarchists should contemplate the recent power failure in the northeastern U.S., which occurred because the bourgeoisie's irrational campaign to privatize public utilities means that there is no central authority in charge of the power grid. Open City's program is utopian, i.e., incapable of being realized. But if it were, the absence of centralized planning would in all likelihood trigger the collapse of the world economy and a reversion of human civilization to pre-capitalist forms of exploitation. At best, competition between various cooperatives would eventually lead to the reintroduction of the capitalist mode of production.

Open City does not subscribe to the revolting views of the Primitivist anarchists. But the Primitivists at least have the courage of their convictions and take the shared anarchist prejudice against "centralism" to its logical conclusion. Their program to abolish all technology and "authoritarian" civilization means a return to a hunting and gathering society and could only be achieved by the death of most human beings on the planet.

Many youth in recent years have sought to fight the glaring inequalities of the imperialist world order by protesting "globalization." Some of these youth identify themselves as anarchists. But the anarchist economic program of decentralization can only perpetuate the division between the imperialist countries and the neocolonial Third World. Only centralized planning on an international scale, based on global exchange terms favorable to underdeveloped nations, can narrow and eventually overcome the divide that separates rural Peru from the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

While anarchists cling to the dogma of "decentralization," Marxists do not fetishize "centralism" for its own sake. As Engels noted in "On Authority":

> "It is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good. Authority and autonomy are relative things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society. If the autonomists confined themselves to saying that the social organisation of the future would restrict authority solely to the limits within which the conditions of production render it inevitable, we could understand each other; but they are blind to all facts that make the thing necessary and they passionately fight the word."

In the end, the real issue is not the degree of centralization but which class holds state power.

The Degeneration of the Russian Revolution

The 1917 Russian Revolution took Marxism out of the realm of theory and gave it flesh and blood. The experience of October won many anarchists to its banner. The dictatorship of the proletariat in practice proved vital to the consolidation of the social revolution. In mid 1918, the counterrevolutionary White armies, supported, armed and financed by the imperialist powers, launched a savage Civil War against the fledgling workers state. There were anarchists who actively fought in the Red Army to defeat the forces of reaction. One such was Vladimir Shatov, who nevertheless remained an anarchist throughout the Civil War. According to Emma Goldman:

> "The Russian experience had taught him [Shatov] that we anarchists had been the romanticists of revolution, forgetful of the cost it would entail, the frightful price the enemies of the Revolution would exact, the fiendish methods they would resort to in order to destroy its gains. One cannot fight fire and sword with only logic and justice of one's ideal. The counterrevolutionists had combined to isolate and starve Russia, and the blockade was taking a frightful toll of human life. The [imperialist] intervention and the destruction in its wake, the numerous White attacks, costing oceans of blood, the hordes of [White military chiefs] Denikin, Kolchak and Yudenich; their pogroms, bestial revenge, and the general havoc wrought had imposed on the Revolution a warfare that its most far-sighted exponents had never dreamed about."
>
> —quoted in Paul Avrich, *The Anarchists in the Russian Revolution* (1973)

Lenin, Trotsky and other Bolshevik leaders viewed the Russian victory as the opening chapter in the international workers revolution. The only way the workers state could survive in the economically backward old tsarist empire was through the extension of the revolution, especially to the advanced capitalist countries. By the end of the Civil War, Russia was exhausted and devastated. Famine and pestilence claimed millions of victims. Agricultural output had dropped precipitously. Industry and transport were in shambles. Many of the militant, class-conscious proletariat had sacrificed their lives in defense of their state. The lengthy isolation of Soviet Russia, its material privation and the devastation of the Civil War gave rise to the bureaucratic layer headed by Stalin.

The genuine Bolsheviks—led by Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition—waged a life-and-death struggle against the Stalinist bureaucratic caste, which usurped political power and began to consolidate its position of privilege atop the workers state in early 1924. While the Left Opposition fought to maintain the revolutionary internationalist program that had animated the early years of the revolution, the Stalinists proclaimed their dogma of "socialism in one country." For its part, anarchism shares common ground with Stalinism. Open City's "networks of self-governing worker and consumer cooperatives" sounds a lot like socialism in one region to us.

Stalin's political counterrevolution was only accomplished by the destruction of the Leninist vanguard. By 1939, Stalin and his narrow clique were left at the head of a party membership of some 1.5 million, a full 70 percent of which had joined after 1929. The only human continuity with Lenin and Trotsky's party was Stalin and his cohorts. Open City must ignore these facts to assert that the "centralized, bureaucratic, topdown party machine" supposedly created by Lenin was the cause of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution. Stalinism was not the product of Bolshevism but rather its political negation.

The Class Nature of the Soviet Union

The consolidation of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union was not a *social* counterrevolution, but a *political* one—the socialized and collectivized property forms remained. The Soviet Union uniquely did not suffer the tremendous falloff in industrial production suffered by the capitalist world during the Great Depression; instead the Soviet economy expanded significantly. The USSR's rapid economic development established as *historical fact* the superiority of a centralized, planned economy.

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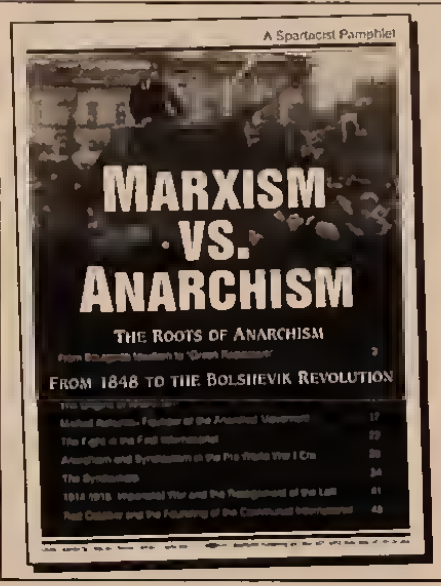

This pamphlet presents a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins of anarchism and the views of its leading figures through the 1871 Paris Commune and the split in the First International and discusses the impact of the 1917 October Revolution. The first article addresses radical youth today who, in an ideological climate conditioned by the so-called "death of communism," are drawn to all variants of anarchism, Green radicalism and left liberalism. The pamphlet is dedicated to the fight to win a new generation to revolutionary Marxism.

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NEFAC...

(continued from page 7)

Although the Soviet economy was terribly mismanaged by the bureaucracy and the Soviet Union lost over 20 million people and a great deal of its industrial base in defeating Hitler in WWII, the Soviet Union was the only country in the 20th century to build itself up from a largely peasant, agrarian economy to an advanced industrial power. It provided full employment, housing and free health care and education for its entire population, made possible only because capitalism was overturned.

Trotskyists unconditionally militarily defended the Soviet Union against the forces of capitalist restoration, whether imperialist armies or internal counterrevolution, and today defend the deformed workers states of Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea and China. Our call for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies and establish a regime of democratically elected workers councils constitutes the most effective defense of these states and is part of the strategy of world revolution against imperialism. The International Communist League (of which the Spartacist League is the U.S. section) fought to mobilize the East German and Soviet proletariats against the capitalist counterrevolutions that destroyed these workers states between 1989 and 1992.

Trotsky made an analogy between the Soviet Union under Stalin and a highly bureaucratized trade union. Unlike some anarchists, Open City does not equate the mass organizations of the working class with the bureaucratic misleaders. It advocates that revolutionaries work within the trade unions and defend them against bourgeois repression. Yet in the case of the Soviet Union, it insists that there was nothing to defend. It is in the crucible of class struggle that misleaders are exposed and revolutionaries acquire the confidence of the working masses; to abstain, to not defend gains already won, is to cede the field to the class traitors and make new conquests impossible.

Doan Cong Tinh

October 1973: North Vietnamese display Soviet-supplied arms outside Hanoi. Soviet workers state as economic powerhouse, military bulwark made possible victorious anti-capitalist struggles.

With the USSR isolated from the world economy and hampered by bureaucratic mismanagement and inefficiency, the productivity of labor within the Soviet Union did not surpass that of modern imperialist capitalism. The relentless military pressure of U.S. imperialism also took its toll. The collapse of the Soviet bureaucracy is graphic confirmation of Trotsky's understanding: the bureaucracy was not a ruling class but a bureaucratic excrescence resting on the planned, collectivized economy.

Open City does not and cannot explain why the Soviet bureaucracy collapsed. What ruling class in history has exited the historical stage without a fight? Capitalism does not collapse of its own internal contradictions—even Open City recognizes that "an organization around a revolutionary program" is required to overthrow it. Why should "state capitalism" be any different?

Open City admits that the collapse of the USSR has brought untold misery to post-Soviet Russia. Implicit in its position is that there are two fundamentally different kinds of capitalisms, one more beneficial to working people than the other. Is this what the members of Open City actually believe?

Platformism and Program

Open City identifies not with the anarchists who fought to defend the Russian Revolution but with those who actively sided against it. The "Platformist" trend in anarchism (which also calls itself anarcho-communist and libertarian communist) takes its name from the *Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists*, issued in Paris in 1926. Associated with the newspaper *Dielo Truda*, the *Platform* was signed by Nestor Makhno and four other émigré anarchists. Makhno had led a peasant army in the Ukraine in 1918-21. It initially worked with the Soviet Red Army during the Civil War but later polarized as its anti-Bolshevik core attacked the workers' Red Army and carried out anti-Semitic pogroms (a documented fact denied by most anarchists today—see "An Exchange on Nestor Makhno: Peasant 'Anarchism,' Pogroms and the Russian Revolution," *WV* No. 656, 22 November 1996). Peter Arshinov (a cosigner of the *Platform*) and the anarchist historian Voline joined Makhno's forces. But as Arshinov (in *History of the Makhnovist Movement, 1918-1921*) and Voline (in *The Unknown Revolution*) both recount, very few other anarchists followed them. The partisan army led by Makhno was composed overwhelmingly of Ukrainian smallholding peasants, who were motivated not by anarchist theory, but by their own material interests as petty proprietors.

The *Platform* represented in the first instance an attempt to come to terms with the fact that the Bolsheviks, not the anarchists, had the support of the toiling masses and had led the Russian Revolution. Makhno's forces had consisted of wealthier peasants and smallholders and had no base in the Ukrainian working class or in the cities. This, along with the anarchist lack of collective organization, Makhno recognized in hindsight was a crucial weakness:

> "It was during the Russian revolution of 1917 that the need for a general organisation was felt most deeply and most urgently. It was during this revolution that the libertarian movement showed the greatest decree [*sic*] of sectionalism and confusion. The absence of a general organisation led many active anarchist militants into the ranks of the Bolsheviks. This absence is also the cause of many other present day militants remaining passive."
>
> —*Organisational Platform of Libertarian Communism*, reprinted by Workers Solidarity Movement (2001)

The *Platform* advocates that anarchists participate in the mass organizations of the working class and that they organize themselves into a "General Union of Anarchists" based on "precise positions: theoretical, tactical and organisational." The Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC), to which Open City belongs, is based on a set of "principles" broad enough to encompass different, and even counterposed, political programs. Open City claims there is no contradiction between the NEFAC slogan "No War Between Nations, No Peace Between Classes!" and Open City's statement that "we hope the U.S. is defeated in its aggression [against Iraq]." But the first represents their program of neutrality in the conflict between U.S. imperialism and neocolonial Iraq, and the second clearly takes a side. Who has the final say on the organization's program?

Open City calls NEFAC a "democratic federation of collectives." A federated organization by its nature gives rise to amorphous ruling cliques not subject to any definite political accountability. Open City follows the *Platform* in criticizing classical anarchism for lacking any provision for the political accountability of its membership and calls for an organization based on the "collective responsibility of each to all." This is only so much verbiage in the absence of real programmatic agreement and leadership bodies.

Class Collaboration and the Antiwar Movement

As Open City acknowledges, war can only be eliminated by abolishing capitalism. The brokers of the antiwar coalitions perpetuate the illusion that war can be stopped by pressuring the capitalist state or the United Nations for "peace." The entire purpose of limiting the program of these coalitions to "stop the war" or other pacifist slogans is to not go beyond the framework of bourgeois politics. Thus, Democratic Party "doves" like Barbara Lee and Jesse Jackson have spoken from coalition platforms. These politicians hold a place should the ruling class decide it necessary to co-opt growing social discontent.

In its original leaflet, Open City glowed about the Iraq antiwar movement:

> "Along with established left groups and peace organizations, the new movement includes neighborhood and church groups. It includes working people, as

Architect of Imperialist Starvation
Columbia SYC Slams Jeffrey Sachs

The bourgeoisie's yuppie lapdog Jeffrey Sachs was hosted by the Columbia Faculty Peace Committee (CFPC) on September 17. Sachs made his name as an infamous braintruster for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) whose "free market" impoverishment plans granted nothing but devastation to millions. A representative of the SYC intervened before an audience of about 500 against Sachs' repulsive presentation on world poverty, titled "How the Neo-Cons Flunked Economics," and exposed Sachs for what he is: a counterrevolutionary hired gun of the CIA and Vatican-backed Solidarność regime who played a key role in reducing Poland to starvation and the Soviet Union to desperation. At this event, Sachs offered unsolicited advice to the U.S. state on how to best exploit Iraq and the world, substituting economic for military subjugation.

That Jeffrey Sachs was feted as an opponent of the Iraq occupation is truly grotesque. The CFPC sponsored Sachs in a move to present "respectable," i.e. *loyal*, opposition to the Bush administration's policies and, as forum chair Eric Foner made clear, to distance itself from the anti-imperialist statements made by Professor Nicholas De Genova at a CFPC teach-in last March, sparking a witchhunt against him.

During the war in Iraq, the Spartacus Youth Clubs and Spartacist League built Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents at the antiwar demonstrations under the demands: ***All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!*** Our contingents were built counterposed to the reformist politics of groups like the International Socialist Organization, ANSWER and Not In Our Name, who sought to funnel justified anger against the war into the Democratic Party, capitalist party of racism and imperialist war. Today, we protest the colonial occupation of Iraq and call for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S./British troops. The international working class and the oppressed people of countries like Iraq and Afghanistan are now facing the consequences of the destruction of the degenerated Soviet workers state, which was a counterweight to U.S. imperialism. We defended the Soviet Union against counterrevolution despite its Stalinist bureaucracy because of the gains of the 1917 Revolution: the end of private property, a socialized planned economy and enormous social advantages for the entire population.

Despite his claims to be concerned about world poverty, it was evident from his summary, in which he applauded the inroads of capitalist property relations in China, that Sachs salivates at the prospect of China becoming a giant sweatshop. We fight for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam against imperialism, including their right to develop and possess nuclear weapons. We seek to lead workers political revolutions to sweep away the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies and establish workers democracies. As the SYC speaker said during the discussion period before being cut off by Foner:

> "My concern is not whether or not the U.S. will be a successful empire by exploiting and oppressing the whole world. Rather, my concern is how to get rid of U.S. imperialism and to smash capitalism. I take a side actually with the oppressed people of Iraq, and we in the Spartacus Youth Club know that the only way to defeat U.S. imperialism is through class struggle here at home, for workers revolution internationally. My question to you is: Isn't it the case that the destruction of the Soviet Union is the reason that the U.S. imperialists have been able to bomb, rob, starve and colonize Iraq? In fact, Jeffrey Sachs should know, as he was one of the architects of counterrevolution in Poland and the Soviet Union.... How can you justify the destruction of the Soviet Union, where your shock therapy plans there have meant massive unemployment, women's oppression, extreme poverty and death? And this is the same thing he has [planned] for China today—"

Chicago SYC Speaks Out Against the Iraq Occupation

On September 16, the Chicago Spartacus Youth Club held a speakout at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), under the slogans: "Down With the Colonial Occupation of Iraq! For U.S./UN Troops Out of the Near East Now! Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!"

Just like our Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents did at the protests during the war on Iraq, we drew a hard line against the left's coalitions with liberal Democrats, calling for class struggle against U.S. imperialism. Our speakers pointed out that the only way to end the brutal imperialist slaughters abroad and the racist state terror at home is to mobilize the power of the working class to bring the capitalist system to its knees through socialist revolution.

And where were the UIC members of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) during our speakout? While dozens of interested students and others gathered at the Lecture Center Plaza listening to our speakers, the ISOers were standing under a tree on the opposite side of the plaza, scowling at us! One SYC speaker aptly noted:

> "The ISO refused to endorse our united-front speakout today. So where is all this 'unity' that the ISO throws around to all the liberals?... Why can't the ISO come out in defense of the oppressed now? They won't touch a protest built by the communists! And they have the nerve to call *us* sectarian! The ISO's idea of sectarianism is anyone who refuses to betray the struggle of the working class by allying with their own imperialist rulers!"

Unlike the ISO, which seeks to pressure the capitalist rulers, the Chicago SYC pointed the way forward in this rotten, racist, exploitative world that we live in, raising the red banner of the Trotskyist revolutionaries of the International Communist League. We made a splash at the UIC campus and explained that to win the struggle against capitalism requires an organized vanguard party with a revolutionary program that can mobilize and lead the working class in struggle.

The SYC fights to train revolutionary cadre to forge a Bolshevik vanguard party. Join us in the fight for a workers party, for socialist revolution! ■

Young Spartacus

well as a growing representation from within organized labor. It includes Black and Latino groups and women's organizations....

> "A large movement is necessary, including a wide range of viewpoints and methods, operating in a democratic and pluralistic fashion."

Open City thought it necessary to be a part of an antiwar "movement" that was based on a bourgeois program and includes bourgeois politicians. This, simply put, is class collaboration, even though Open City looks to act as left-anarchist critics within this "movement."

In its current letter, Open City wants to disappear what it originally advocated. Now it insists that it did nothing different than the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs by building contingents in big antiwar demonstrations. We built our contingents around the demands: *All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!* We appealed to the working class and explained that opposition to the war had to be based on political opposition to, and independence from, the "antiwar" Democratic Party liberals and the left-reformist organizers behind the coalitions. We sought to polarize the antiwar movement along class lines and to address militant youth and others who were genuinely looking for answers as to how to fight imperialist war. Open City sought to build the "movement," whose leaders made sure it was nothing other than an obstacle to mobilizing the working class in its own struggle against the war.

Open City says that "the only way to win even limited reforms is to build a militant mass movement from below which threatens the capitalists with revolution," citing the Vietnam antiwar movement. ***But the Vietnam antiwar movement did not threaten capitalism.*** While many youth who protested the war identified with the Vietnamese social revolution, the reformist misleaders like the Socialist Workers Party were able to contain protest within the fold of Democratic Party liberalism and student-based protest politics. They built coalitions based on the single issue of opposition to the war and including bourgeois politicians. As a result, U.S. imperialism was able to recover fairly quickly from its humiliating defeat *on the battlefield* in Vietnam.

The SL intervened into the Vietnam antiwar protests to win a section to revolutionary working-class politics. We fought for the international proletariat to take a side with the Vietnamese social revolution, raising the slogan "All Indochina Must Go Communist!" This slogan was aimed not only against the imperialists but also against the Vietnamese and other Stalinists, whose advocacy of "peaceful coexistence" threatened to betray the social revolution in favor of a negotiated deal. We agitated for labor strikes against the war, which by 1970 had become a real possibility.

The social discontent that pervaded U.S. society at the time spilled over into the U.S. Army in Vietnam, contributing to the decision by the American imperialists to cut their losses and withdraw. Open City gives equal weight to the antiwar movement and "the Vietnamese struggle." This belittles the heroic workers and peasants of Vietnam, who inflicted a humiliating military defeat on the U.S. in the course of fighting for a social revolution against capitalist exploitation and imperialist depredation. The defeat of U.S. imperialism on the battlefield was made possible only because the Vietnamese Stalinists already held state power in the North of the country, had a centralized military command structure, received military hardware and aid from the Soviet Union (though not enough) and had the implied protection of the Soviet nuclear shield. The Vietnamese victory is a powerful example of the benefits of a centralized workers state, even one that is bureaucratically deformed.

Augusti Centelles

Workers militia during Spanish Civil War. Anarchist leaders joined capitalist Popular Front government; Trotskyist press, *La Voz Leninista*, called for workers to power.

For a Revolutionary Vanguard Party!

Unlike the bourgeoisie, which had significant economic resources within society before it took state power, the only weapons the proletariat has are its organization and consciousness. For these weapons to be wielded, it is essential that the most conscious and self-sacrificing workers combine with declassed intellectuals and organize themselves into a party. The revolutionary proletarian party expresses in its program the long-term interests of the working class and fights for them, in constant battle against agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers movement. Unlike the trade unions, the economic defense organizations of the working class which demand the greatest possible unity, the vanguard party must be based on a revolutionary program and the selection and testing of dedicated militants.

If the history of proletarian struggle in the 20th century has proved anything, it is that the indispensable condition for victorious proletarian revolution is the existence of a revolutionary vanguard party. One of the best examples is the Spanish Civil War, the most promising proletarian revolutionary opportunity in Europe in the 1930s. Spain is one of the few countries where anarchism did have a historic mass base, and Open City says nothing about the National Confederation of Labor (CNT), which was led by the Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI). These anarchists played a despicable role, acting every bit like any reformist social democrat sitting atop a mass workers organization.

Open City argues that the workers in Spain did not form "mass organizations (federation of councils) to replace the state." But there did exist factory councils and peasant councils linked to anarchist-organized workers militias. Spreading these committees and consolidating them into an embryonic proletarian state to fight for power was the central task for proletarian revolution. There was no revolutionary party to undertake this task.

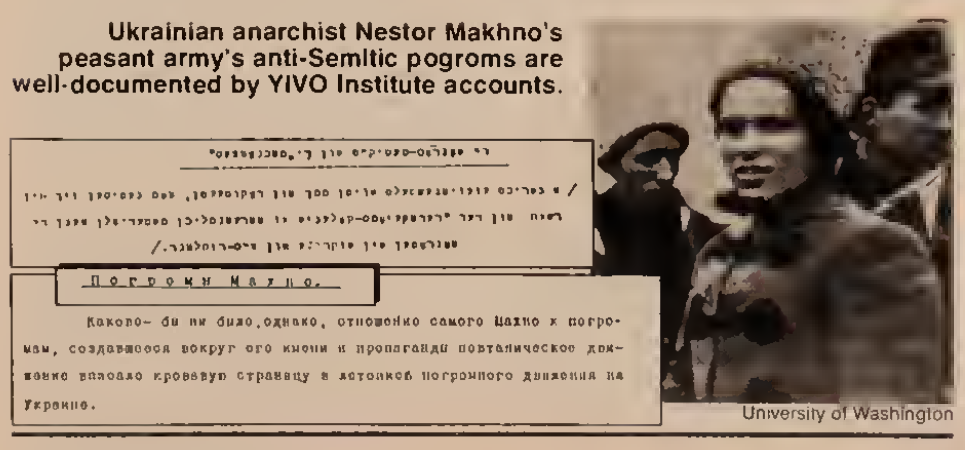
The CNT-FAI leaders joined with the bourgeois liberals and Stalinists in a capitalist Popular Front government. They told the workers not to fight for their own state but instead to defend the "democratic" capitalist Republican state against Franco's fascistic forces. The Workers Party of Marxist Unification, the POUM (often mis-identified as Trotskyist), also signed on to the Popular Front. The genuine Trotskyist forces, who formed blocs at times with the left-anarchist Friends of Durruti, were initially too small and then destroyed by the victory of the right-wing Republican and Stalinist forces in Barcelona in 1937.

The leaders of the CNT-FAI were crucial to demobilizing and disarming the proletariat, paving the way for Franco's victory. Yet NEFAC has carried CNT-FAI banners in Boston antiwar demonstrations. Open City may not agree with their Boston comrades on this practice. But they are in the same organization with them.

On one level, the entry of the CNT-FAI into the bourgeois government may appear to be a gross violation of anarchist principles. But such idealist "principles" explode at that moment when social contradictions arrive at the point of war or revolution. As then-Trotskyist Felix Morrow noted in his history of the Spanish Civil War:

> "Class collaboration, indeed, lies concealed in the heart of anarchist philosophy. It is hidden, during periods of reaction, by anarchist hatred of capitalist oppression. But, in a revolutionary period of dual power, it must come to the surface. For then the capitalist smilingly offers to share in building the new world. And the anarchist, being opposed to 'all dictatorships,' including dictatorship of the proletariat, will require of the capitalist merely that he throw off the capitalist outlook, to which he agrees, naturally, the better to prepare the crushing of the workers."
>
> —*Revolution & Counterrevolution in Spain* (1938)

In the end, anarchism is no guide even on the elementary question of telling the difference between revolution and counterrevolution. The exploited and oppressed of the world need a Marxist-led workers revolution as the first step toward an egalitarian socialist society. ■



University of Washington

Ukrainian anarchist Nestor Makhno's peasant army's anti-Semitic pogroms are well-documented by YIVO Institute accounts.

Abortion...

(continued from page 1)

banned federal funding for abortions for poor women, intoning, "There are many things in life that are not fair." The full-scale assault on abortion rights continued under Republicans Reagan and Bush. In 1992, Democrat Clinton won his election largely because of the support he received for his stand for the maintenance of legal abortion. The feminists celebrated Clinton's victory as their own, consciously demobilizing defense of the clinics. But the frightful erosion of functional abortion rights and the attacks on abortion providers continued unabated. Under Clinton, well over 200 state measures were passed—and Clinton himself signed legislation—restricting access to abortion. He also initiated a massive and vicious assault on poor women, black people and workers with the fulfillment of his vow to "end welfare as we know it."

Between anti-abortion terror at the clinics and anti-abortion laws passed with bipartisan support, abortion became increasingly inaccessible to women, especially poor and black women, in most of the country. Today, 87 percent of all counties and 97 percent of all rural counties in the U.S. have no abortion provider, while the price of an abortion is out of reach for many women. Pregnant teenagers are subject to snooping "parental consent" laws. After Dr. Barnett Slepian's assassination in 1998 in Buffalo, 10 percent of clinics reported resignations of physicians or other staff members, diminishing further the already tiny percentage of doctors who provide this basic health care procedure.

Today, the abortion clinics are under siege and losing ground. Abortion doctors and other staff members are paying a terrible price for their courageous dedication to women's rights: seven have been murdered in the line of duty by "right to life" terrorists since 1993. That no doctors have been killed since the Slepian assassination in 1998 is largely because the anti-abortion agenda is now unambiguously represented by the White House. At the same time, though, according to a Feminist Majority report, in 2002 almost one-quarter of all abortion clinics reported "severe violence," including bombings, gunfire, arsons, bomb threats, stalking, chemical attacks and death threats.

You would never know from the bourgeois feminists that there is a one-sided war against abortion rights. The mobilizations that took place in the early-mid 1990s in defense of the abortion clinics against outfits like "Operation Rescue" were dissipated by the liberals' appeals to Clinton and his attorney general, Janet Reno, for federal legislation to defend abortion, like the 1994 Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act. Feminist groups like the National Organization for Women (NOW) also filed lawsuits against Operation Rescue and others under RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) laws. This has had the effect of ratcheting up the powers of the racist capitalist state while doing nothing to defend the clinics. RICO laws were used not only against the "right to life" killers, ineffectively, but against labor unions, quite effectively. The anti-abortion terrorists, meanwhile, were emboldened by the manifestly impotent legalistic appeals of the feminists to even more provocatively attack the clinics.

The very fact that the phrase "pro-choice" has become the term of choice for the bourgeois feminists underlines their abandonment of any militant struggle for women's rights. As Rickie Solinger noted in *Beggars and Choosers: How the Politics of Choice Shapes Adoption, Abortion, and Welfare in the United States* (2001):

> "The determination of abortion rights advocates to develop a respectable, non-confrontational movement after *Roe* encouraged many proponents to adopt the term 'choice.' In a country weary of rights claims, choice became *the* way liberal and mainstream feminists could talk about abortion without mentioning the 'A-word.' Many people believed that 'choice'—a term that evoked women shoppers selecting among options in the market place—would be an easier sell; it offered 'rights lite,' a package less threatening or disturbing than unadulterated rights."

Fake socialists like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) make occasional criticisms of NARAL and NOW for their reliance on the Democratic Party. But the ISO simply counterposes a more militant version of the same program. The ISO takes NARAL to task for overtly supporting the Democratic Party. However, the ISO's *Socialist Worker* (24 January) writes: "When the anti-abortion tide peaked in the late 1980s and early '90s with two Supreme Court cases that threatened to overturn *Roe*, huge pro-choice marches organized by NOW in 1989 and 1992 had a clear impact." In fact, under the leadership of NOW and NARAL these protests that the ISO lauds were street mobilizations designed to help get Democrats elected. It is not simply a question of taking to the streets, but what you are fighting for.

Roe v. Wade was not a gift from enlightened Supreme Court judges or Democratic politicians. Abortion rights, like other crucial democratic rights, were wrested from the bourgeoisie through tumultuous class and social struggle. The fight to defend the right to abortion—and to make that right meaningful for working-class, poor and minority women—requires a break with the partner parties of capitalism. The drive to reverse access to abortion is part of the "family values" anti-sex campaign, which includes slashing welfare, restricting access to birth control, abolishing high school sex education in favor of "abstinence only" campaigns and funding "marriage incentives" for poor single women. We fight for free abortion on demand as part of the struggle for free, quality health care for all; access to abortion should not be restricted to isolated clinics that can be besieged by anti-abortion forces, but be provided in the hospitals, like any other medical procedure.

The social power of the labor movement must be mobilized in defense of the rights of women as well as blacks, immigrants, gays and all the oppressed. As Marxists, we recognize that women's oppression is rooted in the institution of the family which, along with religion, serves the capitalist class as a bedrock of social conservatism, bourgeois morality and submission to authority. It is essential to forge a multiracial revolutionary workers party to lead the working class in a socialist revolution that sweeps away this system of oppression. ***Break with the Democrats! For free abortion on demand!*** ■

Zionist...

(continued from page 1)

include Arabs as well as Jews, and the most liberal-minded, secular Jews at that.

Only days before the recent provocations, the Zionist garrison-state was jarred by a dramatic public statement by 27 Air Force officers—including a general, two colonels, nine lieutenant colonels, eight majors and seven captains—that they would no longer carry out attacks on civilian targets in the Occupied Territories. Thus these elite elements of the Zionist military establishment added their voices to a similar statement last year by some 500 ground troops and reservists represented by the Courage to Refuse movement. "Such a thing is unprecedented in Israel," noted Israeli liberal Uri Avnery on the *CounterPunch* (29 September) Web site. "Because of the special standing of the Air Force, the refusal evoked a much louder echo than the refusal movement of the ground troops." Though avowing their loyalty to the Zionist state, the "mutinous" Air Force officers have been denounced as traitors by the whole spectrum of the Zionist ruling establishment—from the military brass and the right-wing Sharon cabinet to the politicians of the bourgeois Labor and Meretz opposition parties to the daily *Ha'aretz*, mouthpiece of liberal Zionism.

The courageous actions of the "refuseniks" are hardly likely to sway the Sharon government. But they do point to the extent of war-weariness and frustration among significant sections of the Hebrew-speaking population, who have seen their own living standards decline—while some 400,000 settlers are treated lavishly—and who see no end in sight after three years of anti-Palestinian repression and slaughter. Meanwhile, the plight of the Palestinian population in the Occupied Territories has reached truly desperate proportions. They have been reduced to near-starvation conditions and seen some 2,600 of their neighbors and relatives murdered, including nearly 500 children. In an unusually candid observation for this apologist for the Zionist state, the *New York Times* (4 October) remarked:

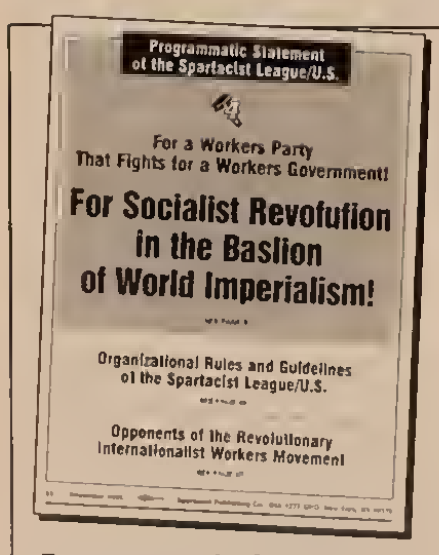
> "The West Bank has the appearance of a wasteland. Life is mostly at a standstill, with big cities, as well as the towns and villages, cut off from one another by a maze of Israeli-built 'bypass roads'—open to settlers but closed to most Palestinians—Israeli Army checkpoints and new concrete-slab walls and fencing and piles of bulldozed rubble blocking roads everywhere."

We demand: ***All Israeli troops and settlers out of all the Occupied Territories! Down with the entire network of settlements, fortified apartheid highways and military checkpoints aimed at suffocating and ghettoizing the Palestinian people!***

The only road to the emancipation of the long-suffering Palestinian people from the jackboot of Zionist repression lies through workers revolutions that topple all the bourgeois regimes of the region and erect in their place a socialist federation of the Near East in which the right of self-determination of both the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking nations is assured.

This necessarily calls for the leadership of internationalist Marxist workers parties, not least to defeat the intruding foreign imperialisms, particularly the American. The Arab working masses must be won from nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism and the Hebrew-speaking proletariat must be broken from the death grip of Zionist chauvinism. We have no illusion that this will be an easy task. But a start must be made by forging a binational Trotskyist nucleus in Israel/Palestine that would seize on every opportunity for class and social struggle to cleave a class divide between the Hebrew workers and their Zionist exploiters and win the former to the defense of Palestinian national rights as an intrinsic component of their own struggle.

The Zionist bourgeoisie's demented ambitions for a "Greater Israel" are of a piece with their exploitation of their "own" working class. In its efforts to break the port strike, the Sharon government has threatened to run scab transport through ports in Egypt and Jordan. Solidarity actions by Arab dockers in Aqaba and Port Said with their Hebrew class brothers and sisters in Haifa and Ashdod would strike a greater blow against the Zionist state and for the eventual liberation of the Palestinian people than any thousand empty United Nations resolutions. ***Not Jew against Arab, but class against class! Defend the Palestinian people!*** ■



Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

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Chicago...

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drivers from the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241 for the past year, and last spring mobilizing by the thousands in riot gear to arrest and intimidate antiwar protesters!

The labor tops' criminal reliance on the capitalist state is part and parcel of the class-collaborationist program on which they have built the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride nationally, making it little more than an election platform for Democratic Party politicians courting the Hispanic vote. The bureaucrats are not even calling for a campaign to organize immigrant workers in unions. Instead, the purpose of the Freedom Ride, with buses organized nationally from California, Houston, Miami, Boston and other cities, is explicitly to pressure Congress for legislative reform, with the vague goal of promoting an open-ended "road to citizenship" for all immigrant workers. The Freedom Ride rallies have been more like election rallies, with American flags passed out and Democratic Party speakers like Congressman Luis Gutierrez and black Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White.

This was in sharp contrast to the first labor-centered demonstration in defense of immigrants targeted by the U.S. rulers' "war on terror," initiated by the PDC and Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense on 9 February 2002. That demonstration, whose core was a contingent of over 30 members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10, was a mobilization of the working class and the oppressed ***independent of the capitalists***, their parties and their state. That demonstration repudiated in action the lie of "national unity" which the racist capitalist rulers have used as the ideological basis for their racist "war on terror." As the LBL speaker at the February 9 demonstration explained:

> "To line up the population behind their war-crazed ambitions abroad, both capitalist parties, the twin parties of capital, the Democrats and Republicans, are fanning the flames of patriotic bigotry through jingoistic 'united we stand' anti-immigrant campaigns. They are fostering the false notion that the ruling class has common interests with the workers even as living standards plunge and the ranks of the unemployed grow. This racist lie means accepting second-class status for black people and denial of citizenship rights for the foreign born. This assault has particularly targeted immigrants of Near Eastern origin. The racial profiling of Arabs and Muslims is promoted by Attorney General John Ashcroft, a lover of the Confederate flag, the bloody flag of slavery and racist terror."

The racist rulers' anti-immigrant witchhunt has put the wind in the sails of the fascist killers. Chicago is a labor town, a black town, a Latino town! Chicago trade unionists, including members of ATU Locals 241 and 308, have been the backbone of labor/black mobilizations against the KKK and Nazis, such as in Gary, Indiana in 2001, and in Springfield, Illinois in 1994. In June 1982, the Spartacist League initiated a labor/black mobilization that stopped a Nazi provocation against the Chicago Gay Pride parade. To unleash the power of labor in defense of immigrants and to drive the fascists from the streets, it is necessary to break the stranglehold of the Democratic Party, and forge a revolutionary workers party fighting to overturn the capitalist system which breeds the fascist scum. As we chanted on September 27: "***Democrats, Republicans, no solution! Build a workers party—for workers revolution!***" ■

Rotterdam...

(continued from page 12)

who tried to escape were attacked from behind: the police always aimed at their heads. Several workers were left lying unconscious on the ground. At least three —one worker from Hamburg, one from Bremerhaven and one from France— required hospital treatment. Although there are no exact figures, according to the ETF (European Transport Union Federation) 26 port workers, mainly from France and Belgium, were arrested and some of them were injured. Two days later, at least one French worker was still in jail. An injury to one is an injury to all!

The Committee for Social Defense calls on trade unions and all organizations of the workers movement and the international left to send protest statements to the Interior Ministry of the Netherlands! Organize union protest meetings demanding the immediate release of all the port workers and that all the charges against demonstrators be dropped! Protest the bloody police attack on the demonstrators against the Port Package!

It is extremely ominous that the capitalists dare to have their police frontally attack a demonstration of workers from across Europe in a strategic industry. Here was a display of social power. Not only Rotterdam, the largest harbor in Europe, was shut down on this day. Antwerp, right around the corner from Rotterdam, was also struck, and on the Belgian-French coast down as far as Rouen, harbors were closed. From the start, police, including mounted police, were at the assembly point, and there were repeated provocations. The Belgian workers, dressed in bright orange and the best-organized of all the contingents, thought correctly that the police had no business being in the demo and defended themselves. The bosses and their newspapers are now particularly going after the militant Belgian port workers, whom they are smearing as violent. They want to play off the German against the Belgian against the French workers, so that tomorrow, if the bosses can't get their ship unloaded in Antwerp because the workers there are striking against the Port Package, they can divert the ship to Hamburg or Rotterdam!

AP

Rotterdam protest attracted thousands of dockers from around Europe.

Even a half year after the protests against the Port Package at the beginning of March in Brussels, the bosses are still mad with rage over those militant international workers' protests. The attack in Rotterdam was also an act of revenge for the port workers' sacrilege in trying to storm the EU headquarters in Brussels. *Down with the nationalist campaign against our Belgian class brothers!*

A representative of the ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) received thunderous applause at the demonstration when he reported about the struggle of the longshore workers against the lockout and the Bush government. In April this year at the Oakland port, ILWU members and antiwar demonstrators were the target of a brutal police attack, where demonstrators and dock workers who were standing nearby were sprayed with wooden bullets and concussion grenades. In early January 2000, hundreds of police attacked picket lines of the International Longshoremen's Association in Charleston, South Carolina, in an attempt to smash the union. Afterwards five unionists, the Charleston Five, faced—but beat back—criminal charges for defending their union.

The police attacks in Oakland, Charleston and Rotterdam are in line with the bloody attacks on the anti-globalization protests—first in Göteborg in 2001, where police first shot youth and unionists in the back and the courts then sent the protesters to jail, and then later that year in Genoa, where the leftist youth Carlos Giuliani was assassinated outright on the street and hundreds of demonstrators were severely injured. As we warned then, this was a bloody message from the capitalists of Europe as to how they will deal with anyone who in some way resists their racist, anti-union Fortress Europe and their imperialist world order. And that's been brutally confirmed—this police terror is ultimately aimed against the unions, which stand in the way of the unlimited greed of the bosses for more and more profit. The attack showed very clearly what the role and task of the police are as the core of the capitalist state: they are the armed fist of the class enemy against the workers movement. They have absolutely no business in the workers movement: *Cops out of the unions!*

This attack is intended to strangle any union resistance to the Port Package, which consists of a series of new EU regulations to make possible, among other things, "self-handling." The largely unorganized, much more poorly paid seamen—and no longer the longshore workers—are to deal with the loading and unloading of ships in the harbors. Apart from that, the "liberalization measures" will help to further increase the profits of the harbor bosses by making it easier for companies paying low wages to compete with those that still have to pay union rates, thus lowering the wages of all port workers. A speaker from Liverpool reported that there are at most a handful of organized dock workers left there after the union got smashed by the bosses' attacks. In the British Isles, these regulations are already in force and the pace of work has led to one of the highest accident rates of all the European ports.

A speaker from the Romanian seamen explained at the final rally in Rotterdam: "Harbor workers and seamen stand together. We won't allow them to play us off against each other." This was greeted with applause. The slogan put forward by the ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) leadership, "Harbor work for harbor workers," spurns the harbor workers' logical allies, seamen and transport workers. It is very important to sharply oppose any attempt to turn the foreign-flag seamen into scapegoats, as has occurred over and over again at protests against the Port Package. The same thing applies to campaigns against "Asian living standards." Such a protectionist program divides the workers along national lines. *It is in the direct interest of the port workers to fight for everyone who loads and unloads ships to get the highest possible union wage, regardless of which country he comes from or who he works for. Equal pay for equal work!*

To prevent harbor workers and seamen from being played off against each other, the harbor workers must fight for union wages for the seamen, who generally have less power and are unorganized, wretchedly paid and exposed to bad working conditions. The annual one-week ITF boycott of low-wage ships achieves important improvements for some seamen, but it must be extended and *joined with* the Port Package protests, instead of separating them from the Port Package protests, as the ITF tops do. ***The port workers must defend the seamen in a struggle for union wages and union rights! For a united struggle to organize dockers, seamen, transport workers, day laborers and others working the harbor into industrial unions! For internationalist class struggle! Down with the racist, anti-union Fortress Europe! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***

* * *

Please fax protest statements with the demand for the release of all workers and the dropping of all charges to the Interior Ministry of the Netherlands, fax: 011-31-70-363-91-53.■

France...

(continued from page 5)

> an identification, capable of sowing only confusion, is much more proper to petty-bourgeois democrats than to Marxists."

The imperialist epoch is marked by the division of the world among a few great capitalist powers who export not only goods but finance capital, based on the private ownership of the means of production. This has nothing in common with the Soviet Union which had a centralized, socialized and planned economy—the entire capitalist class had been swept away. That is why, despite the Stalinist bureaucracy, the USSR could bring progress to the Afghans.

At the time of the withdrawal of the Soviet Union in 1989, LO said that "between the pro-Russian camp and the rebellion, the only difference is that the former are pro-Russian" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 21 January 1989). In contrast, we in the ICL actively solidarized with the Afghan masses who continued to wage a bitter struggle for their survival against the threat posed by the *mujahedin*. We proposed to organize international brigades in order to help them fight the fundamentalist killers supported by the CIA. Our offer was refused, but we nonetheless responded to a call by the PDPA government for financial aid. We raised over $44,000 internationally to aid the civilian victims. We knew that it was better to stop counterrevolution in Afghanistan than in the Soviet Union and that, furthermore, a victory in Afghanistan against the fundamentalists would provide powerful inspiration for revolutionary struggle in the whole region, and for political revolution in the USSR.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Those who, tailing the imperialists, refused to defend the gains of the October Revolution will never be able to make a revolution against the imperialists. And not only did LO refuse to defend the gains of the already accomplished revolutions, but they are even incapable of defending Maghrebin girls against the bourgeois state under capitalism. The only way to fight racism, anti-woman discrimination and war is at bottom to fight for socialist revolution against this intrinsically racist and anti-woman capitalist system. In bourgeois society, women's oppression exists because women are chained to the hearth, the bourgeois family and monogamous relationships to assure heirs for private property. In a socialist society, when there is no more want and inequality, the bourgeois family will be replaced. After the Bolshevik Party led the workers to power in Russia in 1917, Lenin made a speech in which he explained, among other things, the gains of the Russian Revolution for women ("Speech at the First All-Russia Congress of Working Women," 19 November 1918):

> "One of the primary tasks of the Soviet Republic is to abolish all restrictions on women's rights. The Soviet government has completely abolished divorce proceedings, that source of bourgeois degradation, repression and humiliation.... We have passed a decree annulling all distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children and removing political restrictions. Nowhere else in the world have equality and freedom for working women been so fully established."

What allowed the Bolsheviks to pass laws decreeing complete equality between men and women (even if it was not realizable in practice on the limited scale of backward Russia) was the overthrow of private property.

In order to make a revolution, it is necessary to fight to build a revolutionary party. As we wrote in the latest *Spartacist* in the article "Women and Immigration in France":

> "Despite unemployment and layoffs, immigrant workers and their children still occupy a central position in French production. They are also a living link with workers in Africa and Asia. Far from being merely 'oppressed victims,' these immigrant workers possess social power which is key to making a revolution. What's necessary is a revolutionary leadership, a tribune of the people, which fights against the daily racist terror in the suburbs, which fights for jobs for all, especially for the youth of immigrant background, which fights for women's rights, including against forced marriages, against excision and for the right of free abortion on demand. We are dedicated to the construction of a revolutionary party and our beacon is the experience of the Bolshevik Party and the Russian Revolution of October 1917."■

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Local Directory and Public Offices

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National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
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Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
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(Buzzer 23)

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Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
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WORKERS VANGUARD

Chicago Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride Rally

Fascist Provocation Spiked

CHICAGO—When some 2,000 trade unionists turned out at Chicago's Federal Plaza on September 27 for the AFL-CIO-sponsored Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, they were faced with the disgusting spectacle of 19 fascists counterdemonstrating across the street. These Hitler-loving thugs, who included members of would-be *führer* Matthew Hale's Creativity Movement, were carrying signs declaring that all immigrants and the entire immigrant rights rally were "illegal." Ominously, these race-terrorists tried to march into the immigrant rights rally two times. But their attempted attacks were thwarted by supporters of the Spartacist League, Labor Black Struggle League and Spartacus Youth Club, along with a few Anti-Racist Action (ARA) activists, who turned the fascists back both times.

The first group of race-terrorists was driven back before the rally began. About an hour later after the cops had set up barricades between the immigrant rights rally and the fascists, a group of ten Hale followers tried to march right into the middle of the immigrant rights demonstration, carrying their flags and giving the *Sieg Heil* salute. *Workers Vanguard* salesmen and supporters quickly formed a human wall and spiked this dangerous provocation, sending these fascists back into the street. Several of the "white power" thugs were given a good shove to help them on their way, and stumbled over each other like bowling pins. One was doused all over his uniform with yellow paint. Cops quickly rushed in to protect the fascist thugs, who scurried back across the street.

At this point our comrades lined the barricades across from the fascist pack and led a section of the rally, including leftists and groups of Latino youth, to chant them down. We called for "Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!" and "Down with the racist, anti-immigrant, anti-labor Patriot Act!" Many joined in our chant, "Black rights, immigrant rights, same struggle, same fight, workers of the world unite!" and our comrades received congratulations from supporters of ARA and Progressive Labor Party (PL). *WV* salesmen highlighted our program for labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists, distributing over 100 pieces of literature, and 12 subscriptions to *WV* and *Espartaco*, newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México.

The lynch mob terrorists are a deadly threat to black people, immigrants and labor in Chicago, and it is a damned good thing their provocation was spiked! In 1999, Hale's follower Benjamin Smith went on a killing spree in Illinois, taking the life of black Northwestern University former basketball coach, Ricky Byrdsong, and a young South Korean student, Won Joon Yoon. Smith wounded nine others including seven Orthodox Jews. Hale himself is now in prison on charges of plotting to murder a federal judge. Youth around PL and ARA have at times engaged in courageous confrontations with the fascists. But it is the mobilization of the social power of the integrated labor movement, not isolated skirmishes, that can drive the fascist killers back into their holes.

It is an indictment of the AFL-CIO misleaders that with 2,000 trade unionists there at the Federal Plaza, including many Latino and black workers, the Nazi thugs even dared to show their faces in downtown Chicago. It is a further indictment that the Hitler-lovers were not ridden out on a rail when they did show. Earlier in the week when it was first reported that these racist murderers were threatening the immigrants rights rally, the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the SL, contacted the demonstration organizers at the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to see how they planned to respond. We suggested that union defense guards should be organized to defend the rally.

The union honchos made it absolutely clear that they were relying on the Chicago cops of Democratic Party boss Richard Daley to "protect" the labor rally, and that "nothing is going to happen." Urging the September 27 demonstrators to ignore the fascists, these labor fakers placed all their faith in the same racist, union-busting cops who have been arresting HERE strikers at the Congress Hotel this summer, assaulting black bus

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WV Photos

Above: Fascist skinhead, at left, doused with yellow paint, September 27. Below: Spartacist contingent at Freedom Ride rally.

Protest Police Attack on Port Workers in Rotterdam!

Netherlands

We print below a translation of a 7 October statement issued by the Committee for Social Defense (KfsV), the legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League.

On September 29, police commandos brutally attacked a demonstration of more than 8,000 port workers from the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, France, Germany, Sweden and Romania, who were protesting in Rotterdam against the planned European Union (EU)-wide introduction of the anti-union Port Package. Dockers from all the European countries joined together against their common enemy: the international shipping companies and the capitalist EU. The militant protests against the Port Package potentially pose a defense against the attacks on the social gains of the working class which are taking place ***throughout Europe***, like the SPD [Social Democratic Party]-Green government's Agenda 2010 in Germany.

This police attack was the bosses' bloody response to this powerful international action by the dock workers unions. In fact, the site planned for the final rally was a police trap: the Wilhelmina Pier is surrounded by water on three sides, and the only exit was sealed off by the police as soon as most of the Rotterdam workers had left the rally. The workers from other countries and their buses were encircled. Mounted police then stormed the workers' lines over and over again, swinging their clubs and beating the workers bloody. Workers

continued on page 11

Reuters

Cops attack September 29 dock workers protest in Rotterdam, arresting 20 demonstrators.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 812 | 24 October 2003

Pennsylvania Supreme Court Rules Innocence Is No Defense

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Statement by the Partisan Defense Committee

The following statement was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, on October 19.

On October 8, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court yet again ruled that a court of law is no place for evidence of Mumia Abu-Jamal's innocence. That evidence—centered on the sworn testimony of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981—blasts through all the cover-ups and lies used by the state to put Jamal on death row for a crime he did not commit.

The testimony of Beverly, who has allowed his confession to be recorded on video, is corroborated not merely by a series of affidavits but as Jamal's attorneys described, "a stack of memoranda approximately the size of a New York City phonebook" written by PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, another attorney associated with the PDC. Yet it has been ruled out of order by both the Pennsylvania courts where Jamal has sought to overturn his sentence under the state's Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA), and the federal judiciary which has turned down Jamal's *habeas corpus* appeals and slammed shut the courtroom doors on evidence of Mumia's innocence.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is a textbook example of a racist frame-up. A Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15, an award-winning journalist and a supporter of the Philadelphia

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Terry/Gamma-Liaison

Victory to Supermarket, Transit Workers!

L.A. Strike City

LOS ANGELES, October 21—Major strike battles have erupted in Los Angeles and throughout Southern California. Seven United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) locals, representing 70,000 workers, are picketing the three supermarket giants Vons (Safeway), Ralphs (Kroger Co.) and Albertsons. Two days after the grocery strike began, over 2,000 mechanics and maintenance workers in Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1277 downed their tools. Honoring the picket lines, which have shut down the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), are drivers organized by the United Transportation Union (UTU) and clerical, custodial and tool room workers organized by the Transportation Communications Union (TCU).

These strikes have struck a chord among workers throughout the L.A. area. Teamsters truckers have been honoring UFCW picket lines outside supermarkets and distribution centers. Teamsters members themselves are engaged in a number of strikes in the area, including workers at the Darigold milk company and the First Transit commuter route as well as sanitation workers—whose strike has just ended victoriously by winning Teamsters representation at Norcal Waste Services in the South Bay, which includes the airport, heavily black Compton and the posh Palos Verdes community. Meanwhile, 50,000 L.A. and Orange County workers in Service Employees (SEIU) Local 660 have been working without a contract since September 30. Instead of the SEIU's lunchtime contract rallies, now is the time to strike alongside their class brothers and sisters!

Chambers/Orange County Register

Picket line of striking Albertsons grocery workers faces down scab truck in Brea.

The bosses' attempts to gut the unions and drastically slash medical benefits—as much as 50 percent in the case of the UFCW—are at the core of all these contract disputes. Union members are determined to defend their hard-won gains against employer demands that they sacrifice their health and livelihoods on the altar of company profits and government-dictated austerity. Workers with some social power are saying "Enough!" and fighting back with widespread popular support. Victory to the grocery and transit strikes!

Coming only days after the recall election, when the AFL-CIO tops squandered millions of dollars in union dues in a futile effort to keep the widely despised Democratic governor Gray Davis in office, the current outbreak of strikes in Southern California offers a class-struggle road to fight capitalist austerity and union-busting. And it's not just a West Coast phenomenon: 10,000 UFCW workers have struck in St. Louis, while 3,300 followed suit in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio. Other major UFCW locals will have strike votes before month's end. These struggles underline the common interests of the working class as a whole—from Latino immigrants and urban ghetto residents in the Southwest to impoverished white workers in Appalachia—against the capitalist class enemy. The fight for decent health care is a life-and-death issue facing workers and oppressed minorities across the country.

Historically an "open shop" anti-union town, L.A. is a city of vast disparities of wealth, with millions of low-paid immigrants and black workers. In recent years, there have been significant organizing efforts among the many Mexican and Central American workers who are exploited in low-wage, back-breaking jobs. These immigrant workers have brought with them traditions of militant labor struggle from their countries of origin and have helped revitalize the L.A. labor movement, as seen in the "Justice for Janitors" organizing efforts in the early 1990s and the organization of 90,000 home health care and other workers in 1999. This labor combativity was evident in the 2000 transit strike, which came amid a series of other strike battles and had wide popular support among the Latino and black poor who make up the bulk of the ridership in the L.A. mass transit system. The *Los Angeles Times* (29 September 2000) spoke at the time of "Striketown USA" and noted that those strikes "have been a great unifier across racial and ethnic lines."

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Depraved Court Convicts Mother for Son's Suicide

Judith Scruggs

Healey/NY Times

Connecticut

Everything bad that happens is your own fault if you're poor, they tell you at school. Small, weak kids get relentlessly bullied so much they just shut down or actually kill themselves. It happens a lot: suicide is the third leading cause of death for kids aged 10 to 14. If you do grow up, and if you're lucky, you get to work at a meaningless, deadening job that doesn't pay enough. If you're a working woman, there's even more trouble, because now the government is out to put you in jail for "neglect" if anything bad should happen to your kids. And something bad is always waiting to happen when you're poor.

In the old blue-collar town of Meriden, Connecticut, Judith Scruggs, a 52-year-old mother, worked 60 hours a week at two jobs to provide for herself, her 12-year-old son and her 19-year-old daughter. On October 6 she was convicted of a felony count in her son's suicide. Her boy, J. Daniel Scruggs, was small and weak. So at school he was bullied, spit on, kicked and punched. Everybody knew it and nobody did anything, because that's how things are supposed to go in the brutal holding pens called public schools in America. He was so scared of school he stayed home 45 days in the months before he finally hanged himself in the bedroom closet where he often hid, on 2 January 2002. When the cops came, they found the house a mess. The state, incredibly, filed felony charges against the grieving mother for an "unsafe" home that posed a "risk of injury." Judith Scruggs now faces up to ten years in prison.

This isn't just one backwoods prosecutor running wild: only a few days later in New York City a mother in Canarsie, Brooklyn was arrested and faces up to 16 years in prison because her two young children tragically died in a fire. Kim Brathwaite, a single mother from Trinidad, had to go to her 12-hour 3 p.m. to 3 a.m. shift at a downtown Brooklyn McDonald's. Her babysitter cancelled unexpectedly, and nine-year-old Justina and 19-month-old Justin died in a fire in their tiny illegal basement apartment in the early hours of Sunday, October 12. When she got home from work, her children were dead and Kim Brathwaite was charged with "reckless endangerment" and "endangering the welfare of a child," and placed on "suicide watch" by the judge who set her bail so high, at $35,000, it was unlikely she'd be able to get out to attend her babies' funeral. We say all the charges should be dropped against these innocent mothers!

These stories are just the ones that made the newspapers. The daily terror and humiliation entailed in growing up impoverished or black in racist, capitalist America takes its toll largely unreported in the press, where dry statistics on packed prisons and cuts in education, welfare and social programs mask deadly official cruelty. There's an explosion in diseases and asthma rates, with rat and cockroach populations soaring once again in the wake of budget cuts in inner cities.

This brutal world reeks with official hypocrisy, starting with the government in Washington, D.C., which would like to replace the Bill of Rights with the Ten Commandments, and whose only "concern" for the lives of children ends once they're born. "Family values" anti-sex hysteria is used to punish kids and working people, setting up a patriarchal model at total variance with the way most people actually live, a fake ideal to cover the lack of social services, health care, education and day care working people urgently need. A pack of wolves shows more solidarity and concern for its nursing females and young than the capitalist rulers do.

Viewed from the most basic standpoint of any civilized society—how the new generations are raised and educated—U.S. society is an utter disaster. Poor women without husbands are being hounded off welfare, told to get a job or "find a man" any way they can. But then when they do successfully stay off welfare and work to support themselves, like Kim Brathwaite and Judith Scruggs did, they are still blamed for everything that goes wrong. These working women were doing the best they could, and their children died because of the horrible cruelties of the capitalist system.

The capitalist politicians, Democrats and Republicans alike, are part of the problem, and voting for them is no solution. The biggest lie they teach you in school is that working people themselves can't do anything about their condition. In fact, it is the working class which has both the power and interest to fight for the needs of all its members—men and women, adult and young alike—through overturning capitalist rule. Only the establishment of a workers government can lay the basis for abolishing forever the brutal exploitation of labor and the humiliating bullying and intimidation of the poor, of women, of youth, that is its inevitable accompaniment under capitalism.■

TROTSKY

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution was a beacon to workers and the oppressed around the world. The Second Congress of the Third (Communist) International, founded in 1919, recognized the potential of doubly oppressed women workers in the struggle for socialist revolution and laid out the communist program for women's emancipation in a resolution edited by German Communist leader Clara Zetkin.

LENIN

It is imperative that proletarian women play a powerful role in the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and realization of communism. The goal is to secure for all women complete and unrestricted social rights, so that in their education and employment and as mothers they can develop every aspect of their full human personality, linked by bonds of solidarity with society as a whole. The proletariat must attain greater unity and strength so that, in the revolutionary struggle against the bourgeois order as in the revolutionary construction of the new order, it may create the social preconditions for achieving this goal for women....

For women to achieve full social equality with men in truth and fact and not just on the passive pages of dead law books, for women as well as men to win the possibility of unrestricted achievement and free development of their full human personality, two primary conditions must be met. First, private property must be uprooted and replaced by social property. Second, the activity of women must be integrated into the social production of a new order free of exploitation and subjugation. Only the realization of these two conditions will prevent women from becoming economically dependent on men as wives and mothers in the family, or, as a result of the class conflict between exploiter and exploited, falling under the economic subjugation and exploitation of the capitalist as proletarian women working a job.

—"Theses for the Communist Women's Movement," *The Communist International in Lenin's Time: Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress, 1920*, Vol. 2 (Pathfinder Press, 1991)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The closing date for news in this issue is 21 October.

No. 812 **24 October 2003**

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

The Russian Revolution: Workers Take Power
Monday, October 27, 5 p.m.
San Francisco State University
Room TBA

Defend the Gains of the Chinese and Korean Revolutions Against Capitalism!
Wednesday, November 5, 7 p.m.
UC Berkeley, Wheeler Hall, Room 223
Monday, November 10, 5 p.m.
San Francisco State University
Room TBA
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.
October 25: **Introduction to Revolutionary Marxism**
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.
October 29: **The Russian Revolution of 1917: How the Working Class Took Power**
U of C, Cobb Hall, Room 107
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Alternate Tuesdays, 6 p.m.
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Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.
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For a Revolutionary Workers Party! Break with the Racist, Pro-Imperialist NDP! Independence for Quebec!
Thursday, November 6, 6 p.m.
Simon Fraser University
Maggie Benston Centre, Room 2290
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: tllt@look.ca

No to the Racist Expulsion of Lila and Alma!

The Islamic Headscarf in French High Schools

Lutte Ouvrière Spearheads Expulsions in Aubervilliers

AP

Lila and Alma Levy, students expelled from high school for wearing headscarves, targets of French government anti-Muslim witchhunt.

We print below a leaflet issued by the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League, on October 9.

On September 24, two sisters at a high school in Aubervilliers, a Paris suburb, were expelled for wearing the Islamic headscarf, pending a permanent decision by the disciplinary committee which will take place tomorrow. These expulsions come as a national debate is taking place. A government commission (the Stasi Commission) has been set up to study the possibility of banning the Islamic headscarf at school. President Chirac and Prime Minister Raffarin cynically pretend to be interested in the fate of young Muslim girls. No way! They feel so concerned that they are deporting hundreds of Muslims, animists and others daily by charter flights! The government is so determined to fight Islamic fundamentalists that in late August they deported Nasr Eddine Bourrached, a spokesman for *sans-papiers* [undocumented immigrants] in Perpignan, to his probable death at the hands of Algerian Islamic fundamentalists! The government is so worried about the fate of Muslims that they fuel the lie that every Muslim is a potential terrorist with Vigipirate, a campaign of daily racist terror. The Ligue Trotskyste de France says: ***Down with Vigipirate! No to the deportation charter flights! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No to the racist expulsions of girls wearing the headscarf! For Alma and Lila to be reinstated at school!***

Right-wing politicians are not the only ones fighting for the racist expulsion of girls who wear the Islamic headscarf at school. Lutte Ouvrière (LO) [a left group that claims to be Trotskyist] spearheaded the campaign for Lila and Alma's expulsions in Aubervilliers. According to *Le Monde* (9 October), "Teachers who are members of Lutte Ouvrière have argued since the beginning of the school year for immediate sanctions." Whatever their intentions, LO is campaigning for the same thing as the government. LO hails the teachers who fought for Alma and Lila's expulsion: "Well, we approve of the teachers who had the courage to defend that position and we hope that there will be many more in this country. Furthermore, teachers should not need an excuse, should not have to rely on a law. Their vocation as teachers and their conscience should be enough" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 26 September). In other words, LO calls for teachers to do the job themselves of expelling girls wearing the headscarf, in the middle of a hysterical campaign in France to do just that.

LO is not alone in its campaign to expel the schoolgirls. The Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) has some internal differences, but at the Aubervilliers high school they differ with LO only on a nuance: the LCR seeks to "avoid as much as possible deprivation of education and expulsion" but "we do not want to exclude the possibility of sanctions if dialogue is not possible" (*Le Monde*, 9 October). The LCR member continued: "The problem is that those two students go much further.... They pursue a logic of activism." An LCR teacher even denounced the JCR (Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire, youth organization of the LCR) because the JCR has the correct position of opposing the racist expulsions (*Le Monde*, 9 October). Nevertheless, the JCR is "politically subordinate" to the LCR, and the JCR is preparing to campaign in the spring for the electoral slate—and thus for the politics—of the LO/LCR. Whether it is done by Raffarin's racist laws or by teachers who are members of LO and LCR, the result for these schoolgirls is the same: "Get out!"

We defend Alma, Lila and all girls who wear the headscarf against the reactionary bourgeois state and against the teachers and others who seek to expel them. At the same time, as communists, we oppose the Islamic headscarf and the veil which represent a reactionary social program of confining women to the family, the home and a position of subservience (see "Women and Immigration in France," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 57, Winter 2002-2003). Our opposition to the veil and the headscarf is also part of the reason that we oppose the expulsions. These expulsions can only lead to even greater isolation and oppression for these young women. Their religious beliefs can only be reinforced if they are cut off from public education. We defend secularism and the separation of church and state, but the principle of secularism is deformed by the racist, anti-worker and anti-woman French state when used to attack young Muslims wearing the headscarf. Secularism is based on the idea that the state should not interfere with people's personal beliefs. Alma and Lila's father, a lawyer for the MRAP [an anti-racist group associated with the French Communist Party], aptly evoked the hypocrisy of this campaign when he referred to the "ayatollahs of secularism who have abandoned common sense" (*Le Monde*, 25 September). This man, who opposes the veil and has fought against the expulsion of his daughters, correctly denounced the "double punishment" that risks being inflicted upon them: "the one which they wear on their heads and the one which would deprive them of the humanity that school provides" (*L'Humanité*, 9 October).

LO does not defend the schoolgirls' expulsion on the basis of secularism but rather primarily on the basis of "defending women." LO claims that it is necessary to expel girls wearing the headscarf for their own good: "The question is not the 'right' of some girls to wear the veil, but the right of thousands of young girls and young women to rely on the banning of the veil to stand up against the reactionary constraints that their social milieu tries to impose on them" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 19 September). LO claims that it is possible to turn schools into havens of progressivism. That in no way resolves the oppression of women who are forced to put the veil back on as soon as they leave school. Furthermore, LO's campaign to expel girls from school reinforces the racist segregation which is one of the sources of oppression for these girls.

Confined to the ghettos, youth of immigrant origin in France are denied jobs and a decent future; so they seek an identity in religion. This is the case of Alma and Lila in Aubervilliers. Their father is a Jewish atheist, their mother is from Kabylia [a Berber-speaking region in Algeria], and these sisters do not regularly attend the mosque. This is far from being an exception. In the absence of any perspectives and given the hopelessness in capitalist society, youth are increasingly turning toward Islam. These young women seek refuge in religion as a "heart in a heartless world" (as Karl Marx put it), as an illusory consolation in the great beyond for the very real suffering down here. Contrary to LO and the LCR, who want to make people believe that Alma and Lila pursue a "logic of activism" for Islamic fundamentalism, the reality in France is that many of these girls wear the headscarf in reaction to racist segregation in this society. Islam is a religion of the oppressed and of the ghetto. Even Alma and Lila insist that they "would never wear the veil in a country in which it is obligatory" (*Libération*, 22 September).

LO argues that some left groups "call for the 'right' of young Muslim women to wear the veil at school. Sometimes they add the argument that, in the absence of that right, they will not have access to culture and to the knowledge acquired in school. This is actually a concession to reactionary pressure" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 19 September). The real reactionary pressure in France comes from the bourgeoisie (which, furthermore, uses the imams and pushes them forward in order to control the ghettos), not from young girls wearing the headscarf! LO falsely suggests that those who oppose the racist expulsions necessarily accept the veil. There are in fact groups that do not believe that the veil is a symbol of oppression. For example, Socialisme Par en Bas [Socialism from Below—SPEB, affiliated with the British Socialist Workers Party of the late Tony Cliff] says: "The Islamic headscarf represents, above all, a symbol of resistance to religious and racist oppression" (*Islamisme et Révolution*). However—as opposed to the SPEB, LO and the LCR—we in the LTF have always fought fiercely against the veil and Islamic reaction, and we continue to do so. In Afghanistan one can see most clearly who really wanted to fight against the oppression of veiled women.

The only time in centuries that Afghan women were not forced to wear the suffocating *burka* was in the 1980s. That was because in 1979 the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan at the request of the government—a petty-bourgeois, modernizing regime that sought to lower the bride price. Under the protection of the Red Army, Afghan women were trained as nurses, teachers and soldiers. This was just the opposite of what the French colonial capitalists did in Algeria, because the Soviet Union was a workers state. Despite

continued on page 6

Le Bolchevik

1981: LTF protest in defense of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan against Islamic reaction.

L.A. SYC Organizes Strike Support Rally at PCC

On October 16 the Los Angeles Spartacus Youth Club initiated a united-front rally at Pasadena City College (PCC) around the slogans: "Victory to the UFCW grocery workers strike! Victory to the transit workers strike! Picket lines mean don't cross!" Afterward, we brought students out to the picket lines to show their support for the striking workers.

Earlier in the day, a member of the SYC went out to the ATU picket lines and invited union members to come and speak to the PCC students. Two workers came out. PCC students cheered as one of them spoke. Many students we spoke to understood that the workers' fight for health benefits, union jobs and pensions would benefit them, too. Some students are grocery workers themselves. The grocery and transit strikes in Los Angeles are concrete examples of the power that workers have to shut down production.

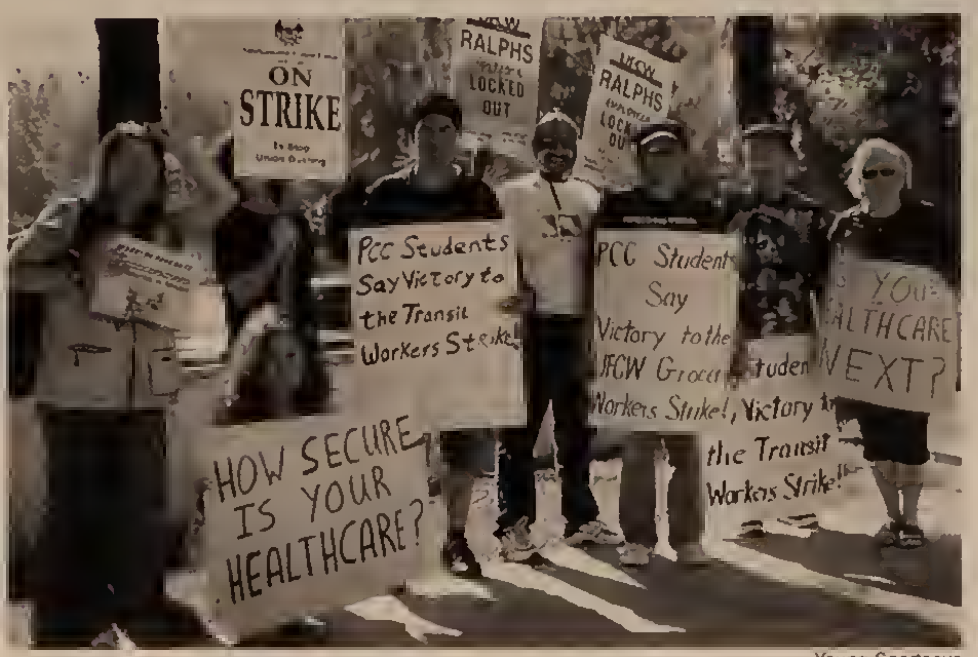
Earlier in the week, we had invited Students for Social Justice, a leftist campus group at PCC that includes anarchists, to endorse and speak at the united-front rally and to come to the picket lines with us. But even though they were nearby during the rally, they declined to speak. Originally, they planned to support the strikers by protesting at Von's corporate headquarters—that is, by begging the bosses. To their credit, after our march to the picket lines, Students for Social Justice organized students to go to the picket lines too.

At the picket lines, one of their members handed out a leaflet critical of the labor leaders and the Democratic and Republican parties. The leaflet also advocated a general strike of workers and students. That's a good sentiment—but what the Students for Social Justice did not advocate was that the working class fight to take power, expropriating the bourgeoisie and running society in its own interests and in the interest of all the oppressed. Real social justice requires a socialist revolution. And that will take leadership, a revolutionary vanguard party. We print below, slightly edited for publication, the speech delivered by SYC member Camilo at the united-front rally.

* * *

I'm Camilo with the Spartacus Youth Club here at PCC. We seek to bring revolutionary socialist politics to students at PCC and win them over to actively take the side of workers and the oppressed. We are the youth group of the Spartacist League, which is the U.S. section of the International Communist League. We follow the program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

We are here today in a strike support rally to mobilize students to take the side of workers against the bosses—both the MTA transit workers and UFCW grocery store workers who right now are on strike because of threatened cuts to their health care benefits. These strikes are very important to support because when they are walking their picket lines, they are fighting *not only* for themselves, they are fighting for wages and health care of all workers and the oppressed, as well as in defense of unions themselves! If you cross those picket lines you are actively aiding the capitalist bloodsuckers.



Young Spartacus

Spartacus Youth members and PCC students join strikers at UFCW picket location in Pasadena, October 16.

The Students for Social Justice are supporting the strike by going to the corporate headquarters to pressure the company, making appeals to the conscience of the bloodsucking bosses. But a strike is a question of *power*. We seek to build solid picket lines that *no one* dares cross! Strikes work by shutting down production, stopping the flow of profits to the bosses. These strikes show that the workers make the city run—the workers should run the city! We seek to build a vanguard workers party to lead an international socialist revolution and do away with the racist capitalist system. *Picket lines mean don't cross—Side with the workers against the bosses! PCC students: Join the fight, take a side for workers rights!*

As communists, we in the SYC and SL fight for free health care and quality education for all. But under the economic system of capitalism, workers, minorities and the poor will never be guaranteed free health care and education because capitalism is based on profit. The capitalist administration of Gray Davis just slashed the budgets of community colleges and increased the tuition and fees at all the public colleges in the state—this is a racist purge, denying access to higher education for working-class and minority youth. Capitalist society is divided into two main classes, the capitalist ruling class and the working class. Only a few rich capitalists own the means of production and the raw materials while the majority of the population are workers who produce all the wealth of society but are exploited and subjected to all forms of oppression and repression. *Capitalism offers no solution! For international workers revolution! Asian, Latino, black and white—Workers of the world, unite!*

Imperialist war abroad means racist attacks against blacks, immigrants and unions here at home. As internationalists we defended the Soviet Union which served as a deterrent to U.S. imperialism. U.S. imperialism was able to rape Iraq because the Soviet Union no longer exists. Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! We fought to win U.S. workers to stand in solidarity with their working-class brothers and sisters in Iraq by taking a side against their own ruling class, by defending Iraq against U.S. imperialism without giving any political support to the capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein. We called for U.S. workers to oppose the bloody imperialist war drive through class struggle here at home. Imperialist war is an inevitable product of the capitalist system, which is why we say: *Capitalism means racism and war—Workers revolution is what we're for!*

Domestically, the "war on terror," which is enthusiastically supported by the Democrats and Republicans alike, has meant anti-immigrant witchhunts directed overwhelmingly against Muslims and Arabs and is also aimed at attacking organized labor. In the eyes of the ruling class, a strike by the working class disrupts their "national unity." This has been demonstrated over the past period by the Taft-Hartley union-busting injunction against the ILWU longshore union last year during the lockout by the bosses. New Jersey teachers two years ago were slandered as representatives of the Taliban when they dared to go on strike. We say: *Down with the anti-immigrant witchhunt! For full citizenship rights for all immigrants! The working class has no nation!*

So why didn't transit or grocery store workers strike during the recall election? Because their leadership in the unions looks to the Democrats for "help." In contrast, we in the Spartacus Youth Club and the Spartacist League seek to *break* workers from the Democratic Party, the party of racism and war. We need to build a multiracial, class-struggle workers party. The Democrats represent the same capitalist system—they just lie better than the Republicans. The worldview of labor tops—even those of the most "progressive" stamp—is defined by what is possible or "practical" under capitalism, a system which is predicated on the exploitation of labor. We communists pursue another road, one based not only on getting better terms of exploitation but fighting to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery.

Hillary Clinton was on the board of directors of Wal-Mart and played a major role in strikebreaking against transit workers in New York City. The grocery workers are being told by their union leaders to protest Wal-Mart, a southern strikebreaking company, because Wal-Mart buys Chinese goods. We seek to organize the South and organize Wal-Mart workers into unions. We defend the Chinese deformed workers state because the 1949 Revolution overthrew capitalism, which is a very good thing. But China today is in danger of capitalist counterrevolution due to the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy which runs China. *Defend China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea!*

We will continue to fight for socialist revolution through organizing the working class and engaging in class struggle. So if you are interested in learning more about the SYC/SL and revolutionary politics, check us out. Come march with us to join the picket lines! Now!■

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L.A. Strikes...

(continued from page 1)

The prominence of immigrant workers on the front lines of these strikes underlines the connection between defense of the unions and defense of immigrant rights. This means opposing the "national unity" barrage pushed by the bosses and echoed by their labor lieutenants, which is used to justify a "war on terror" that is in fact a war against immigrants, black people and all of labor. The AFL-CIO tops sow illusions in the capitalist Democratic Party as "friends" of labor and minorities, as during the recent Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. Instead, it is necessary to fight for a workers party and to mobilize the working class independent of the capitalist parties to demand: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Jesse Jackson, speaking at a UFCW support rally yesterday, was widely applauded when he spoke about the need to organize the unorganized. Jackson's appearance at the rally testifies to the national significance of the Southern California strikes. And with low-wage, anti-union giants like Wal-Mart prominent in the retail industry, the need to organize the unorganized *is* urgently posed. But this can only be achieved through the mobilization of labor's power *against* the capitalists. Instead Jackson preaches unity between the union and the union-hating grocery bosses against Wal-Mart. Jackson only seeks to use the L.A. strikes to boost the "friends of labor" credentials of the Democrats in the buildup to the 2004 elections.

Speaking at an October 16 strike support rally organized by the Spartacus Youth Club at Pasadena City College, one transit worker said:

> "A victory for us against the union-busting attacks by the MTA and the grocery bosses will be important not only for union members but for the over three million uninsured workers and immigrants here in Los Angeles. We need to take the lead in fighting in defense of all those here in Los Angeles who have been victimized by this anti-union town, by the anti-union bosses....
>
> "What we have to depend on is our solidarity, our strength and our numbers on the picket line—*where it counts*—and *not* on appeals to the Democrats. In our last strike, three years ago, the Democratic Party of this town was anti-union and...they led the offensive against the unionized drivers and mechanics of the MTA. And we will never forget the fact that [MTA board member and county supervisor] Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, that Jesse Jackson told us to actually come back and kiss the feet of the MTA bosses. We say no! We'll fight in our defense and fight in defense of all those people in this county that need health care."

Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!

The struggle here in Southern California began when grocery workers struck the Vons supermarket chain after "last ditch" negotiations sponsored by a federal mediator broke down on Saturday evening, October 11. UFCW officials had delayed the strike for the futile talks, expressing "tremendous respect" for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. But the government and its agencies are not neutral mediators in the class struggle—they are the executive committee of the capitalist class. The real purpose of government mediation is to pressure the unions into capitulation in the name of "compromise."

The retail food giants want to shift an estimated *$1 billion* in medical insurance costs onto UFCW members—estimated by the union at an additional $3,455 per year in one possible family scenario—forcing lower-paid workers to drop medical coverage altogether. The employers also want to ax the union's defined-benefit pension plan in favor of a cheaper cash-contribution model which places workers at the mercy of the stock market. Threatening the union's very existence, the grocery bosses are demanding a two-tier wage system with significantly lower pay and benefits for new hires, the subcontracting out of union labor and the right to open non-union stores in "non-union" areas.

The employers' hardline demands are so outrageous that the UFCW officials were finally forced to call a strike. Yet they announced in advance that the union would only strike one of the big three chains. The companies responded, as promised, with a lockout at the other chains, prompting workers to set up picket lines over an area extending from Central California to the Mexican border. Outside a Vons warehouse in El Monte, a scab trucker nearly ran over a UFCW picket captain, only to be shepherded away by the cops afterward. At another location, when a union-hating customer knocked a picket sign out of a worker's hands, the striker shouted back: "You can't cross picket lines on two broken legs!" *Picket lines mean don't cross!*

Some strikers have expressed illusions that the L.A. County sheriffs' "sickouts" are part of labor's struggle. The sheriffs, and all cops, are the racist hired guns of the bosses. Their job is to defend the bosses' property, break strikes and suppress social struggle from the picket lines to the ghettos and barrios. On October 15, Robert Haeberle, the father of a striking UFCW worker, was arrested by the Fullerton Police Department for helping his son defend a picket line at Albertsons against the driver of a scab truck. Strikers told *WV* that the truck nearly ran Haeberle over and that the driver spat on him.

The leaders of unions like AFSCME and SEIU that organize cops, parole officers and prison guards are betraying the basic interests of working people and the oppressed. Cops out of the unions!

Teamster solidarity is the key to a grocery workers victory not only in this strike but in organizing non-union outfits like Wal-Mart. While Jim Santangelo, head of Teamsters Joint Council 42, vowed to honor UFCW pickets, Teamsters delivery drivers—while themselves honoring the lines—have routinely allowed scabs to drive their rigs the final 100 feet or so across UFCW lines at the stores. This kind of empty solidarity doesn't sit well with many Teamsters who know that if the UFCW strike loses, they'll be targeted next—strikers at Vons reported rumors that the company plans to replace Teamsters drivers with owner-operators in the 2005 contract round. While the Teamsters are honoring the picket lines at two struck warehouses, according to the *Los Angeles Times* (16 October), "Santangelo said some members already were pushing to widen the job action to [the ten Teamsters-organized] warehouses, but he indicated that such action was premature."

The unions must *shut down* all the processing and distribution centers to win: nobody shops at empty stores! That would mean mass pickets to stop all scabbing—defying restraining orders to "limit pickets" and preparing the union to deal with cop and court scabherding. This perspective, including the mass pickets needed to stop all scabbing, goes against the outlook of—and would have to be carried out through a political struggle against—the legalistic, class-collaborationist labor bureaucracy.

The UFCW strike has from the outset elicited broad popular support, with business at the markets a fraction of what it was before the strikes. But the bureaucracy's focus on a consumer boycott is a diversion. In the end, consumer boycotts don't win strikes—they are always partial and subject to the vagaries of media-manipulated "public opinion." At the same time, the union misleaders have welcomed "friend of labor" Democratic Party officials. At an October 16 UFCW support rally, there were in fact more local Democratic Party politicians called on to speak than union officials. The labor bureaucracy's loyalty to the Democratic Party is the political expression of its commitment to class collaboration in defense of the capitalist profit system. And that means, for the sake of class peace, they are willing to call off strikes and accept rotten compromises and empty promises.

While numerous Democrats have cynically proclaimed support for the supermarket workers—in an attempt to put a lid on the struggle—liberal Democrats on the MTA board have been in the forefront of attacks on the ATU strikers, vilifying transit workers as indifferent to the plight of the working poor. MTA board chairman and county supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky ranted, "People who depend on the transit system to get to work, to get to school...will be held hostage to a set of demands that are unreasonable and unmanageable." This is obscene coming from bourgeois politicians with $140,000-per-year salaries who have presided over the L.A. County budget cuts and devastated public hospitals, schools and social services.

The MTA similarly tried to play the race card three years ago during the 32-day strike of UTU bus drivers, hoping to pit the black and Latino poor against the unions. The transit bosses' ploy didn't work, however, as the strike by mainly black and Latino bus drivers was widely popular. The unions should actively reach out to the ghetto and barrio masses for support and solidarity on the picket lines. Championing the interests of the oppressed, including through the demand for *free mass transit*, is the way to build real public support.

The union bureaucracy's allegiance to the Democratic Party and the capitalist state is counterposed to class struggle. For months the transit union misleaders had been doing everything possible to demobilize the membership and avoid a strike. ATU maintenance workers had voted overwhelmingly to strike in January, while UTU drivers did likewise in June. When a strike against the union-hating MTA bosses appeared inevitable this summer, the ATU and UTU bureaucrats pleaded with Gray Davis for a 60-day "cooling off" period, in effect asking the capitalist government to bar their memberships from walking out. ATU Local 1277 president Neil Silver then cravenly asked the bosses' courts to rule on whether ATU members could honor UTU picket lines if the drivers struck first while mechanics were still "cooling off"! Only when the MTA refused to back off from its demands to extort $200/month employee medical insurance contributions as well as hijack the union-run health trust, which the MTA had been underfunding, did the ATU tops finally pull workers off the job.

Silver has returned to the negotiating table at the urging of Democratic mayor James Hahn and City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa. Looking to end the strike as quickly as possible, Villaraigosa declared, "We're pushing parties to the table. The only side we're taking is the

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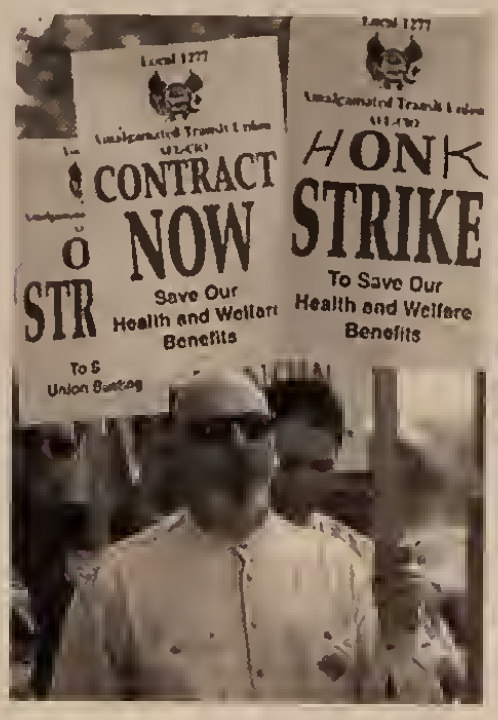

AP photos

Left: Transit workers walk the picket line. ATU strike has shut down L.A. transit system. Above: Strike rally by grocery workers in L.A., October 16.

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L.A. Strikes...

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side of the public" (L.A. *Daily News*, 16 October). While balking at an immediate return to work without an agreement, Silver declared in advance his willingness to cut a deal to increase health care contributions and cede partial control of the union health fund.

Selling out workers struggles on behalf of the Democrats is nothing new for labor bureaucrats. But they don't always get away with it. Transit workers remember that during the last UTU drivers strike in 2000, when Davis signed a law demanded by the union tops that any new "regional transit zones" be covered by existing contract provisions for four years. Silver immediately bowed to Davis and ordered ATU members to cross the drivers' picket lines! Flouting a 30-year tradition of transit unions honoring each other's lines, Silver declared, "If there is a picket line, it shall be crossed." Silver was forced to reverse himself within 24 hours as his membership—almost to a man—defied him and refused to cross! The heroic stand by the maintenance workers and the determination of the other unions forced the MTA to back off its harshest demands.

This time around, while UTU drivers are honoring the ATU strike, most are not manning the picket lines. The bosses are trying to get a contract negotiated with the UTU first in order to put pressure on ATU members to settle for a substandard contract. No one should go back to work until everyone has a contract! All UTU drivers, Teamsters transit workers and TCU members should be out on the picket lines alongside the ATU. *All* the regional buses and Metrolink rail lines which bring in the suburban business commuters should be shut down. What's needed is a single industrial transit union from Santa Monica to Foothill, San Fernando Valley to Long Beach.

Organize Wal-Mart!

The corporate grocery giants have all cited non-union Wal-Mart's low wages and minimal benefits as the reason they need to drastically cut labor costs to remain competitive. UFCW officials have rightly dismissed this as a negotiating ploy, since the "big-box" Wal-Marts that sell groceries are only projected to have 1 percent of the local market share. Yet the biggest cheer at the October 16 UFCW support rally went to Villaraigosa when he announced that he was going to sponsor a bill to keep out non-union Wal-Mart superstores. This epitomizes the legalistic, lobby-your-Democrat strategy, which substitutes futile reliance on local ordinances and lawsuits for the necessary task of union organizing.

In those few instances where the UFCW has tried to organize individual Wal-Mart stores, workers who vote for the union in NLRB elections are invariably fired or otherwise driven off the job. As reported in the *Nation* (28 June 2002), two weeks after the first successful election for union representation at a U.S. Wal-Mart store—the Wal-Mart Supercenter in Jacksonville, Texas—in February 2000, the company announced that it would eliminate meat-cutting operations in 180 stores and switch to pre-cut beef. This was followed by a spate of firings over petty infractions. As of last June, the union had gotten the NLRB to issue 40 complaints against Wal-Mart in 24 states, all to no avail. Even with such rulings, the damage is already done, resulting only in a slap on the wrist. The UFCW might take a lesson from garbage haulers in L.A. who, in the midst of the current grocery and transit strikes, withdrew their petition to the NLRB for union recognition and went on strike instead.

The failure of the AFL-CIO to organize the South has meant that fanatically anti-union corporations like the Arkansas-based Wal-Mart, now the world's largest retailer, are driving down wages and living standards everywhere. The labor movement needs to organize Wal-Mart workers starting in those areas already unionized and extend the organizing drive to the South. Any serious effort to organize the South requires a fighting labor movement committed to the cause of black liberation. The unions will have to face down company gun thugs and Klan terror in order to organize workers and lead integrated strikes. But this won't happen playing by the bosses' rules.

Opposed to a class-struggle perspective, the UFCW and Teamsters tops' anti-Wal-Mart campaign instead appeals to flag-waving patriotism, which serves only to fuel anti-immigrant chauvinism—particularly poisonous in a city where first- or second-generation immigrants make up a goodly portion of the unionized proletariat. Wal-Mart is lambasted for importing most of its apparel and much of its general merchandise despite its "Buy America" programs. The unions' protectionist outlook is offered up in the "progressive" guise of opposing sweatshop labor. The labor tops point to the fact that Wal-Mart is one of the largest buyers of China's growing export goods, which are now mainly produced by firms jointly owned with Western capitalists. With their anti-Communist China-bashing, the AFL-CIO misleaders join in the American bourgeoisie's counterrevolutionary crusade to open up China to capitalist exploitation and turn it into *one giant sweatshop*. China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state where capitalism was overthrown as a result of the 1949 Revolution and whose economy is still based on nationalized property. Just as workers defend their unions—despite sellout leadership—against the bosses, workers must defend China against imperialist-backed counterrevolution despite the Beijing bureaucracy's accommodation to capitalism.

AP

Jesse Jackson and Democratic Party MTA board member Zev Yaroslavsky embrace after helping to end 2000 transit strike.

In fact, the "AFL-CIA" (as it is known internationally) has long acted as a pawn for the American imperialist rulers in fomenting counterrevolution and propping up anti-labor dictatorships abroad. The union bureaucrats have even less appetite to help organize workers abroad than they do to organize the South, and can only demand that America's racist capitalist rulers enforce "labor standards" designed to ban cheap foreign goods. *WV* was told by one striker that UFCW organizers passed out American flag pins to Wal-Mart workers after 9/11 in displays of patriotic unity. But there is no unity of interests between labor and capital, and appeals to patriotism only serve the bosses' interests.

Health Care U.S.A.

It is a measure of the huge gains embodied in the planned, collectivized economy of those countries where capitalism has been overthrown that tiny Cuba, despite a decades-old U.S. embargo, has been able to provide decent health care to its population, resulting in an infant mortality rate comparable to the U.S. as a whole and better than many American ghettos. In America, with its vast wealth and medical technology firmly in the grip of the capitalists, health care has become a crisis of epidemic proportions. As the rates of poverty and unemployment rise, the number of those without health insurance has grown to some 40-45 million nationally. At the same time, Medicare payments are being slashed and millions driven off the welfare rolls. Those not lucky enough to find job-based health insurance are one medical crisis away from a major family catastrophe.

Hit by the national recession and facing (as of June 2002) an $800 million health budget shortfall over the next three years, Los Angeles County, dubbed "capital of the Third World," has embarked on another round of criminal cutbacks to an already destitute public health care system. With over three million L.A. County residents having no health insurance, the majority Democratic County Board of Supervisors has closed four school-based health centers and 11 of its 18 remaining public health clinics, causing the *L.A. Weekly* (30 August 2002) to proclaim L.A. the "ground zero of the national health care crisis."

The irrationality of capitalism is such that the basic needs of life are held hostage to profit. Medical care is denied to improve the capitalists' bottom line. Safeway/Vons CEO Steven Burd recently declared that the grocers' hardline stance slashing medical benefits and labor costs "is an investment in our future" (*Los Angeles Times*, 17 October). Well, working people need to fight for a future without capitalism. The only way that immigrants, blacks and all working people will be assured free, quality medical care is to rip the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist class and put them in the hands of those whose labor builds this society.

Safeway and the other grocery bosses are planning on a long battle to wear down the strikers. But it doesn't have to go that way. If the warehouses are shut down and *all* the chains are struck, transit stays out and *extends* the strike to the regional lines, and other unions join the fray in *strike* action, this could be over in a hurry.

What's needed is a class-struggle leadership of the unions. Workers must break from any illusions in the Democratic Party as a "lesser evil" and fight to defend their class interests. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party. Such a party, acting as a tribune of all the oppressed, would mobilize in hard class struggle against capitalism to defend existing gains and fight for a socialist future. Victory to the grocery and transit strikes!■

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Headscarf...

(continued from page 3)

the political domination by a parasitic Stalinist caste, the social basis of the USSR was the expropriation of the capitalists and the collectivization of the economy; this was incompatible with the medieval enslavement of women under the *burka*. Lined up against the USSR and the Afghan government were the anti-woman *mujahedin*, those who today once again have the upper hand. The U.S. and French imperialists supported and armed these reactionary fundamentalists, from Massoud to the Taliban and bin Laden, who wanted to force women back into the veil and kill as many Soviet soldiers as possible.

At the time, LO condemned the Soviet intervention, saying that Afghanistan was like Vietnam. They wrongly equated the rape of Vietnam by the French—followed by the American—imperialists with the progressive intervention of the Red Army in Afghanistan (*Lutte de Classe*, 7 July 1980). As for the LCR, they wrote in 1988 that the fall of the Afghan government "would in any case represent a lesser evil than the perpetuation of the Soviet entanglement in Afghanistan" (*Inprecor*, 11 April 1988). We, on the other hand, declared: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend the gains of October 1917 to the Afghan peoples!" And we fought against the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989. The fruit of this betrayal by the Soviets in Afghanistan is the horror that exists there today. Those who now shed crocodile tears for the fate of Afghan women and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the world do not want to admit it, but at bottom the cause is the fall of the Soviet Union. In the 1980s, LO and the LCR refused to oppose the worst Islamic scum in Afghanistan, and today they complain about Islamic fundamentalists in France! But these two positions are linked in a very concrete way: then, as today, they sided with their own French bourgeoisie.

In order to liberate women, not only from the veil but from every form of oppression, it is necessary to fight for workers revolution which is the only way to do away with the material basis for oppression. To achieve that, it is necessary to build a revolutionary workers party. Such a party would fight in the interests of all workers and thus against racist terror and the oppression of women. That is the party we seek to build. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!■

Mumia...

(continued from page 1)

MOVE organization, Jamal was saddled at trial with a lawyer he didn't want—and one who did not want Mumia's case—a judge, Albert Saho, known as the "king of death row," an overwhelmingly white jury, a prosecutor's office that concealed and fabricated evidence and a parade of witnesses who were coerced by the notorious Philadelphia police into giving lying testimony against Mumia.

Jamal's innocence has been evident from the outset. We have repeatedly exposed the D.A.'s case, which rested on three legs: eyewitness accounts that were secured through police manipulation, coercion and outright terror; a purported "confession" by Jamal while he was lying near death in the hospital, which didn't surface until two months after the killing; ballistics "evidence" concocted by the police that the bullets that killed Faulkner were fired from Jamal's gun.

This is Texas lynch law justice—up North. Not only did the court bar Beverly's confession but rejected the sworn account of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter of a conversation she overheard in the courthouse where Mumia was tried, in which Judge Saho declared in regard to Jamal's case, "I'm going to help them fry the n----r." As Jamal's legal papers stated:

> "Judge Sabo's vile racist comment... meant that, in Judge Sabo's courtroom, Mr. Jamal, like Dred Scott before him, was not a citizen with rights guaranteed to him by the Constitution, but rather an inferior being with 'no rights which the white man was bound to respect'."

The court justified its refusal to even consider Maurer-Carter's testimony by claiming the issue of Sabo's bias had already been litigated and ruled upon in Mumia's 1995 PCRA appeal—before the same Judge Sabo, who exonerated himself of any racist animosity and prejudice toward Mumia!

This latest setback appears to terminate Mumia's appeals before the Pennsylvania state courts, leaving only his *habeas corpus* appeals in the federal courts. Those appeals have been on hold pending the recent ruling by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Nearly two years ago federal court judge William Yohn overturned Jamal's death sentence while affirming the conviction, condemning him to a life of prison hell. Jamal's attorneys appealed that decision, seeking to overturn the conviction. The state appealed as well, seeking to reinstate the sentence of death. Still on death row, Mumia remains just a short walk and maybe a few months from the death chamber. Workers, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression must now redouble their efforts to mobilize mass protests centered on the social power of the labor movement to demand: *Free Mumia now!*

Death Penalty—Capitalist Barbarity

Jamal's case throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery. In the U.S., where the decaying capitalist system offers no future to millions of inner-city youth, the death penalty, the mass incarceration of black men and the elimination of welfare speak to the bourgeoisie's impulse to genocide. For more than a decade, Democrats and Republicans did everything in their power to increase the number of victims and speed the pace of state-sanctioned murder. In 1993 the Supreme Court ruled in the Texas *Herrera* case that the execution of an innocent man was not unconstitutional. Such contempt for the lives of the black and Hispanic poor was clearly expressed earlier this year by prosecutor Frank Jung who, when asked by a Missouri Supreme Court judge, "Are you suggesting even if we find Mr. Amrine is actually innocent, he should be executed?" replied, "That's correct, your Honor."

WV Photo

New York City, 23 October 1999: Trade unionists at PDC-initiated anti-Klan mobilization.

Even as scores of men and women condemned to death have proven their innocence and won their freedom in recent years, numerous states have adopted laws with stringent time restrictions on filing death penalty appeals on newly discovered evidence. These restrictions make it virtually impossible for victims of prosecutorial frame-ups to uncover the evidence to prove their innocence of the killing for which they were sentenced to die. Pennsylvania's law, enacted in 1995 explicitly to cut off Jamal's appeal rights, provided the pretext for the current court ruling barring Beverly's confession as untimely. The federal Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, signed into law by Democratic president Clinton in 1996, was the pretext for federal court judge Yohn also barring Beverly's testimony in Jamal's *habeas corpus* appeal.

Using these laws, the capitalist rulers send black, Hispanic and working-class men and women to their graves as if it were no more than a question of an overdue library book. In opposing Jamal's motion for a stay of execution during his 1995 appeal the prosecution bared the state's contempt for Mumia, grotesquely declaring, "The carrying out of a valid death sentence cannot constitute irreparable injury for purposes of requesting a stay"!

The entire history of the state's vendetta against Jamal reveals that the courts have in fact spurned any provisions of the law that would allow this outspoken champion of the oppressed to walk out of prison a free man. As Jamal's attorneys explained, his case is governed by the Pennsylvania death penalty statute's exception to the filing deadline, where "interference by government officials" is responsible for the failure to previously raise a claim. As they demonstrated, in actively working to suppress Beverly's confession and other evidence of Jamal's innocence, Jamal's attorneys at the time, Leonard Weinglass and Daniel Williams, "acted in function, if not in fact, as *agents* of government officials insofar as their actions served the interests not of petitioner, but of the District Attorney."

Jamal's current attorneys utilized information provided in Wolkenstein's affidavit (reprinted in the PDC pamphlet *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!* [September 2001]), stating, "For nine whole years, attorney Weinglass and attorney Williams did more than any prosecutor could ever do to send Petitioner Jamal to his death. They strangled at birth the evidence which shows that he did not kill Police Officer Faulkner and, in the process, jettisoned numerous other decisive claims for relief." Wolkenstein and Piper, in fact, resigned from Jamal's legal team in 1999 precisely over the suppression of the Beverly confession. As she explained in her affidavit, Weinglass' refusal to proceed with Beverly's confession and other evidence "was also my final realization that attorney Weinglass would not carry out the defense demanded by our innocent client."

That Weinglass and Williams played the role of prosecutor was set forth for the world to see in the publication two years ago of Williams' false "inside account" of Jamal's case, *Executing Justice*, published shortly before Beverly's confession was submitted to court. Williams' declaration that Beverly's confession was "lunacy" was the core argument used by prosecutors in fighting to keep this conclusive evidence of Mumia's innocence out of court.

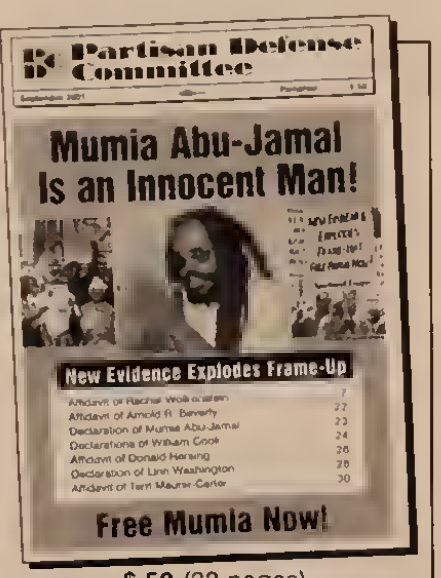
The court didn't merely reject the argument that Weinglass and Williams were acting as agents of the state, but pronounced that it wouldn't even matter if they were. According to this court, five of whose members are former prosecutors, the state's interests are not inimical to those of Jamal (or any other defendant in a criminal case). "The Commonwealth, having the obligation to seek justice, is not a 'beneficiary' of poor defense lawyering"—i.e., they're claiming that incompetent defense doesn't benefit the state and its prosecutors!

Among the judges endorsing this ruling is Ronald Castille, who was District Attorney at the time when his subordinate Jack McMahon made an infamous videotape instructing members of the D.A.'s office on how to exclude blacks from juries. Castille was the D.A. opposing Jamal's first appeal, and was later one of the members of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court who turned down Jamal's appeal of Sabo's denial of his PCRA in 1997. A number of defendants have had their convictions overturned on the basis of this racist jury-rigging—but not Mumia. Castille has blocked every effort by Jamal to determine his role in the production of the McMahon video.

The court's lie that the prosecutors are just impartial truth seekers was shared as well by Weinglass and Williams. Williams' entire book is an articulation of the idea that the capitalist state is some kind of neutral arbiter, expressing and defending the interests of all the people. But the state is not neutral. It is the instrumentality for organized violence by one class, the capitalist rulers, against the working class and all those at the bottom of this society. In the U.S., this is expressed in the terror and frame-ups carried out by viciously racist, brutal and corrupt police.

Williams' hatchet job reflects the views of a layer of liberals whose function is to refurbish the credentials of the capitalist "law and order" system by curbing its "excesses" and giving it the appearance of fairness. They ignore the overwhelming evidence that Mumia is innocent and instead speak of his supposed "guilt." Among the latest examples is Dave Lindorff, who writes for *CounterPunch* and the *Nation* and recently authored the book *Killing Time*, and filmmaker Michael Moore, who declares in his recent book, *Dude, Where's My Country?*, that Mumia "probably killed" Faulkner but "that does not mean he should be denied a fair trial or that he should be put to death." It is precisely to appeal to such liberals that the reformist left, most notably Socialist Action and the Workers World Party, subordinated any call for Jamal's freedom to the demand for a "new trial" for Mumia—as if he could get a fair trial in the racist capitalist courts.

The latest ruling against Jamal underscores—***again***—that for a defiant and outspoken opponent of this racist system like Jamal, there is no justice in the capitalist courts. As we explained in the introduction to the pamphlet *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!*: "The long bidden and suppressed evidence of Mumia's innocence is the truth. But in this capitalist system of injustice, the truth is insufficient to secure Jamal's freedom. What we need is not just more truth but more social power. It is elementary that if labor's power is to be brought to bear in a mighty blow on Jamal's behalf, it must be mobilized independently of the very forces of the capitalist state that have worked for years to frame up and kill this innocent man." *Mobilize now to free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!*■



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LOS ANGELES

Women and Revolution

Mexico...

(continued from page 12)

the possibility of *maquiladora* factory jobs. After the end of the U.S. *bracero* program, which functioned as an escape valve for the unemployment crisis in Mexico, the Mexican government opened the first free-trade zone in 1965. Foreign investors who set up a factory in Mexico near the U.S. border were exempt from tariffs (for the parts they imported) and didn't have to pay other taxes. This was extended in 1994 with NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement], which converted all of Mexico into a source of enormous imperialist profits based on the miserably paid labor of Mexican workers. The Mexican, American and Canadian sections of the International Communist League wrote in a joint statement in 1991: "While strengthening the U.S. bourgeoisie against imperialist trade rivals, an FTA [Free Trade Agreement] will also subject the working masses of the Americas to greater exploitation. We call on Mexican, U.S. and Canadian workers to join in opposing this anti-labor pact" (see "Stop U.S. 'Free Trade' Rape of Mexico," *WV* No. 530, 5 July 1991).

The right-wing clerical government of Fox and his band of seminarians ensures that Mexico is a very attractive place for foreign investment and for Mexican blood-sucking bosses while it attacks the rights of all working people and of specially oppressed sectors of society such as indigenous people, women and homosexuals. The privatization of nationalized industries being sought by Fox would hit millions with hunger and unemployment. The economic recession has already caused the closing of many *maquiladoras* and massive layoffs, especially in the border zone. Between the year 2000 and mid 2003, 700,000 (one out of every ten!) jobs have been lost in Mexico's manufacturing sector (*El Norte*, 1 September). This occurs in the context of the worst unemployment crisis in six years. Women, who in general occupy the least skilled and more easily replaceable jobs, are the most affected.

Radele/Liaison

Ruben R. Ramirez

Women form strategic part of working class in border zone *maquiladoras*. Below: 1995 strike at RCA Thomson plant in Ciudad Juárez.

Women in the *Maquiladoras*

Guillermina Valdez Villalva, founder of the Center for Orientation of Working Women in Juárez, said:

> "When the plants first came to the city, we always expected them to hire the unemployed male. But very soon we discovered that...young women between the ages of 16 and 21 were the only ones hired."
>
> —Quoted in *Women and Revolution* No. 34, Spring 1988, "Class Struggle in the 'Global Sweatshop'"

Work in the *maquiladoras* is characterized by its mechanical and repetitive nature. What matters is to have agile fingers, to be young and to be in great need in order to be willing to withstand the worst. A large component of women who work on the border left their peasant and/or indigenous communities with the hope of no longer being subjected to the family nucleus, although they usually send part of the money they earn to their parents or siblings. Also living in the border zone are men and women who tried to cross into the U.S. to work and didn't make it or were deported.

Sandra Arenal's book *Sangre joven* [Young Blood] recounts a series of conversations with women workers who express their strength and anger over their experiences upon arriving at the *maquilas* [factories]. Stories are told about supervisors who decide to have the personnel strip every now and then to make sure they haven't stolen some of the clothing they sew. A woman worker in the electronics industry has to solder 2,000 tiny, barely visible parts in one day. Pain caused by repetitive movements and diseases caused by work materials are common.

> "My sister started to work at SILVANIA on 30 January 1974, and from there she went to TUBOS ELÉCTRICOS in 1981 and then to the HONEYWELL plant in Juárez, where she died. The cause of her disease, according to the hematologist who saw her at the hospital, was that she was anemic in the fourth degree due to acetone, which is the substance she had handled daily at work.... She was only 30! During her funeral I heard that around the very same time another woman worker had died."

A 22-year-old woman who had already spent six years in the *maquilas* said she had "outlasted others." Her finger bones are deformed and on both hands she has an enormous yellow-brown callus from the tip of the thumb, over the back of the hand, to near the wrist. Looking at her hands with sadness, she says: "They will not pay me for my hands!"

The Origins of Women's Oppression

In our article "Capitalist Exploitation and Anti-Woman Terror" (*Espartaco* No. 13, Fall-Winter 1999), in which we analyzed the attacks against women in the Ciudad Juárez *maquiladora* zone, we explained:

> "We communists fight to end the oppression of women, an inheritance of the social backwardness maintained by the bourgeoisie. We stand out in our fight for full equality for women and their complete integration into the workforce. We call for equal pay for equal work and for free, safe abortion on demand as part of a free, quality health care system. But the eradication of women's oppression requires an immense leap forward in the existing material conditions—and this can only be achieved through a socialist revolution not only in Mexico but by means of the creation of an internationally planned economy based not on capitalist profit but on the fulfillment of everyone's needs. In other words, the liberation of women cannot be realized separate from the emancipation of the working class."

One of the ironies of history is that the special oppression of women is linked to one of the first social advances: the development of technology beyond what was necessary for the minimal subsistence that characterized hunter-gatherer societies. Agriculture, metallurgy, domestication of animals and other revolutionary advances made possible the existence of an idle ruling class living off the work of others. The institution of the family, which demands monogamy and women's domestic slavery, emerged to ensure that the inheritance of property passed through the male line. Male-chauvinist ideology, propagated by the ruling class through government institutions, the media and religion, serves to justify the subjugation of women.

With the growth of capitalist industry, the entry of women into the workforce in factories has taken them out of their isolation in the home and provides a prerequisite for their emancipation: participation in social production. However, under capitalism, this means adding wage slavery to domestic slavery. The complete liberation of women from this double oppression can only take place through the replacement of the family with the socialization of domestic work. The expansion of the productive forces laid the basis for the socialization of domestic work, but this will not happen under capitalism because the family plays an important economic role for the bourgeoisie. In a socialist system things would be very different. The planned economy would allow the replacement of the economic functions of the family with 24-hour childcare, and collective laundries and kitchens. ***For women's liberation through socialist revolution!***

Police Terror and Illusions in the State

Lilia Alejandra was the 17-year-old mother of a three-year-old boy. She worked for the *maquiladora* Servicios Plásticos y Ensambles in Ciudad Juárez. Her body was found wrapped in a blanket on 21 February 2001 in an unlit empty lot which she crossed every night to get home from work. The forensic doctor explained to her parents, when they went to identify the body, that there were signs of physical and sexual violence and that the cause of death was strangulation. The same day that Lilia Alejandra didn't come home, the neighbors around the empty lot had called the police to report that a woman was being beaten and raped by two men in a car. A police car arrived at the site only after the neighbors made a second call, and it still took over an hour. The car had already left.

Various investigations and testimonies point to the nefarious role of the police, "special prosecutors" and government agencies. We completely solidarize with the demands for justice from the families of the victims and from organizations like Mujeres de Negro [Women in Black] and Casa Amiga [Friendly Home]. Simply seeking some justice can turn one into a target of attack. A secretary at Casa Amiga, which provides psychological support services and carries out investigations about the crimes, was shot down in the doorway to the organization's office.

But the desperation that the disappeared and murdered women's families live with, the indignation that many people around the country feel, and the fear

This pamphlet assesses recent changes in the world economy in a historical perspective, from the origins of modern imperialism in the late 19th century through the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the former USSR and its aftermath. Reformist ideologues of "globalization" seek to obscure the role of the capitalist nation-state and the danger of interimperialist war which is inherent in capitalism, while amnestying the refusal of the labor bureaucracies to wage class struggle against their respective bourgeoisies.

Exploitation, poverty and social degradation can be eliminated only through proletarian revolutions in the imperialist centers as well as the neocolonial countries, laying the basis for an international planned socialist economy.

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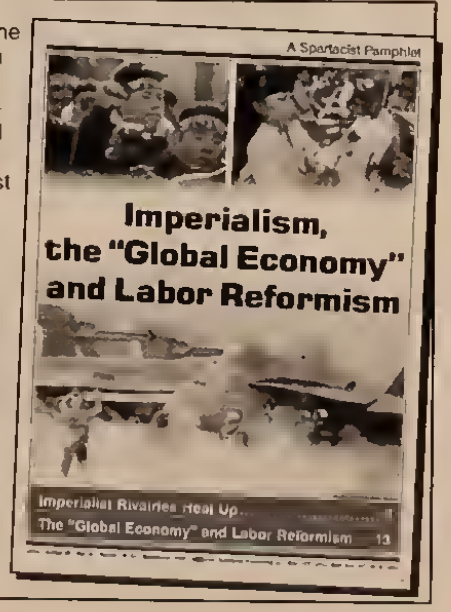


among women workers of becoming "one more" victim is channeled into a deadly illusion: the idea that with more police presence the anti-woman crimes will stop.

The solution is not pressuring the state —the armed bodies of men that one class uses to maintain its hegemonic power over another—to function better. It is necessary to understand the social role of the capitalist state in assuring capitalist domination over the working class. A key part of capitalist rule is the subjugation of women; anti-woman violence is inherently part of capitalism. The police, army and courts are, and will be, used to break combative strikes that stymie the bourgeoisie and to perpetuate the oppression of women.

The United Nations, that den of thieves whose sanctions killed 1.5 million Iraqis and set Iraq up for the U.S. attack, is now the "human rights" cover for an expansion of the repressive police force in Juárez. The UN sent a commission to Juárez which has recommended that the FBI train Mexican police. During the civil rights movement in the U.S., the FBI worked hand in hand with the fascist Ku Klux Klan to murder fighters for civil rights, even including four young black girls in a church in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963. This gives some measure of how grotesque the notion is that these imperialist agencies could defend women's rights.

In the documentary *Señorita Extraviada*, there is an interview with a woman named María, who was charged with public disturbance along with others and taken to the Cárcel de Piedra prison in Chihuahua. There the police raped her and took her to a clandestine cell. After she was released, she reported the police, and although they were captured, they were never sentenced. In spite of the death threats she has faced, she tells of her experience at the police headquarters courageously and with tears in her eyes:

> "And then one of them said, 'Or what, do you want us to take you to Lomas de Polco?'... he began throwing pictures of the girls at me: 'Look at them, bitch, look at them, bitch.'... All of them were dragging her, through the bushes...there they rape her...they start beating her...in the pictures you see them laughing at what the other is doing...you could see the [women's] faces...like this, in pain, suffering, crying and yelling."

The purpose of the police force as a whole, independent of the degree of moral corruption of the individuals who comprise it, is to carry out the violence and terror that the bourgeoisie needs to stay in power. Fighters for social justice must unite with the social power of the working class. No other force can end capitalism or the oppression and violence that it generates. We oppose calls on the bourgeois state to increase its police forces. ***No illusions in the armed fist of the bourgeoisie!***

We are for the right of armed self-defense. Of course, the right to bear arms will not emancipate women, whose oppression is deeply rooted in the capitalist system and its fundamental institutions, and this emancipation can only be achieved through a socialist revolution. However, the right to bear arms makes an obvious difference in one's capacity for self-defense. But the existing gun "control" laws in Mexico and other capitalist countries ensure that the army, police and criminals have a monopoly on arms. And it is precisely the police and the criminals that the women of Juárez fear, not only because of the murders, but also because of the role that they play in opposition to the organization of women workers in the *maquiladoras*.

The Struggle for Women's Emancipation

Stopping this wave of terror is in the interest of the working class and the oppressed. Women make up 30 percent of the working class. They are a doubly oppressed layer of the proletariat maintained as a lower stratum and a reserve army of labor that the bourgeoisie uses to divide workers, keeping wages low and thereby increasing the exploitation of all. The future for women and their struggle for complete emancipation is linked to class struggle against capitalism.

We Spartacists fight to forge a revolutionary Leninist-Trotskyist party to intervene in social struggles and thus change the consciousness of the working class. Lenin wrote in *What Is To Be Done?* (1902), "Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers ***only from without***, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers." We seek to build a leadership of the working class that fights as a defender of all the oppressed. Lenin explained that the ideal revolutionary

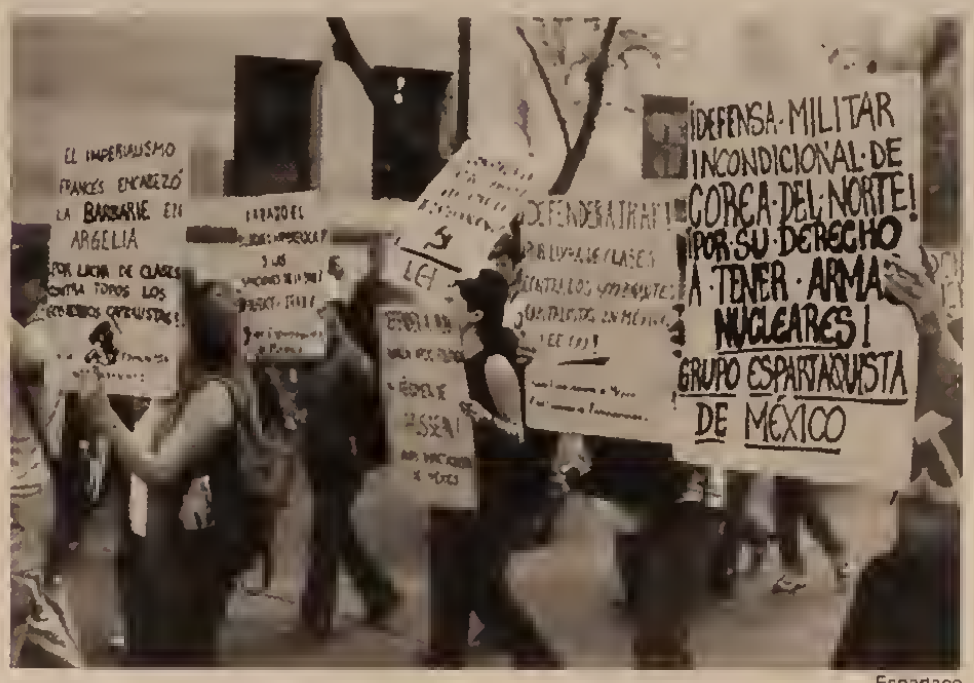
> "should not be the trade-union secretary, but the ***tribune of the people***, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

The most class-conscious militants in the unions should fight to mobilize the social power of the working class to fight against the oppression of women, to organize them in the unions with salaries and rights equal to those of men. They should fight for free, quality health care services, and for the right to free abortion on demand. They should fight to organize workers detachments to defend the women against these attacks. But the current union leaderships aren't even interested in demanding buses to transport the personnel—a basic service—while many women workers in Juárez are murdered walking through solitary fields on their way to their jobs or back home. The situation of the working woman is, on its own, proof of the total bankruptcy, servility and male chauvinism of the union bureaucracy.

While a large portion of the workforce on the border and in the country in general is not unionized, the CTM [Confederation of Mexican Workers] is the main workers union in the *maquiladora* zone. Their pro-capitalist thug bureaucrats tied to the [former ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party] PRI daily mobilize teams of thugs against labor struggles for better wages or union democracy and are sadly renowned for their "protection contracts" which are totally favorable to the bosses and signed behind the backs of the workers. It is obvious that the CTM heads couldn't care less about the situation of working women. And aside from some inoffensive forum here or there that has more to do with protecting their "image" than looking for some favorable change for women workers, the "independent" bureaucrats who are loyal to the PRD [opposition Party of the Democratic Revolution] and to the inherently anti-woman capitalist system also do nothing to improve the situation of working women nor to unionize those who aren't unionized.

The Fight Against Imperialism: For Proletarian Internationalism!

The woman worker of the *maquiladora* earns a miserable wage in a foreign-owned factory which produces exorbitant profits for the owners. The woman worker of Juárez sometimes takes two hours to get to work on foot because there aren't even paved roads between where she lives and the avenues for the trucks that take the raw materials to the factories. The oil worker fears losing the minimal economic stability he has gained in the face of the threats of privatization and foreign investment. The *campesino* [peasant] can't make a living anymore off his land because of the competition from American agribusiness. The indigenous woman is forced to beg in front of a huge bank headquarters into which she would never be admitted.



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Mexico City, February 15: GEM comrades march in demonstration against U.S. attack on Iraq.

All of these victims of imperialist oppression should understand that the only hope for liberation is the mobilization of labor's power against the entire capitalist system. While Mexican capitalists might feel resentful for having been left behind in the international fight for domination, they are no friends of the oppressed and cannot lead an anti-imperialist struggle. In fact, the national bourgeoisie couldn't maintain itself without the help of their imperialist masters.

We revolutionaries base ourselves on Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, the basic premise of which is that in the epoch of imperialism the countries of belated capitalist development cannot attain the general level of economic productivity of the advanced countries. The productive forces are the scaffolding that supports the entire superstructure of legal, political, religious and cultural relations in society. While the oppression of women in the industrialized countries shows the limits of liberty and social progress under capitalism, in "Third World" countries like Mexico the situation of women is profoundly rooted in precapitalist "tradition" and religious backwardness. Thus, the fight for the liberation of women will be an indispensable motor force for revolution.

No wing of the bourgeoisie can play a progressive or revolutionary role. It cannot bring any significant advance for women and all of the oppressed. The fact that the bourgeois-nationalist PRD often poses as a defender of women is simply a testimony to the brutal ideological backwardness of its bourgeois opponents. An example of this was the scandal caused by the "Robles Law" introduced by the PRD in Mexico City a couple of years ago. While we defend this law, which grants the right to abortion in the case of deformation of the fetus or danger to the woman, against clerical attack, we note that the PRD has made clear its opposition to the unrestricted right to abortion. In general, the capitalist class opposes full access to abortion because it allows women some freedom from total subordination in the family structure.

The only way to be rid of the imperialist yoke and obtain elementary democratic rights for women and the oppressed is for the proletariat to take state power through a socialist revolution and reorganize the economy in a planned and rational manner.

The phenomenon of the *maquiladoras* clearly shows the potential power of the unity of workers in the U.S. and Mexico. They are part of a common industry with the same bosses. Conscious of the social power that the proletariat would attain through unification of its struggles, the American and Mexican bourgeoisies apply "divide and conquer" strategies. This obstacle to joint struggle of all the oppressed against their common oppressor comes in different forms in different countries, and one of the principal tasks of revolutionary parties is to combat these ideas that only serve the bourgeoisie.

Our comrades in the Spartacist League/U.S. know that the struggles of the workers against the bosses and that of blacks and immigrants against racism will advance together or fall back separately. In the U.S. it's necessary to combat anti-black racism in all spheres, including among Hispanic immigrants. Our comrades also intervene for the working class to raise the slogan "Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!" (see "Oakland Labor-Centered Mobilization Defies 'National Unity'—Defend Immigrants! Defend the Unions!" *WV* No. 775, 22 February 2002). In Mexico, bourgeois nationalism has been the main ideological obstacle for the working class in its battle against exploitation. It is necessary to combat the false consciousness of Mexican workers that their ally is the Mexican boss and not the American worker.

And in both countries we combat the anti-woman ideology that is a prop for the capitalist system which requires the subjugation of women. Only in this way will we be able to forge a revolutionary, proletarian, internationalist party with the capacity to finish off the capitalist system of exploitation, misery and terror once and for all. ***For women's liberation through socialist revolution!*** ■

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Recall...

(continued from page 12)

the necessary political fight for working-class independence from the capitalists and their parties that will make the forging of such a party possible.

Against the reformist illusions and schemes for shortcuts promulgated by the ostensibly revolutionary left, the Spartacist League stands on the Transitional Program—*The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*—the founding program of the Fourth International written by Leon Trotsky in 1938. We seek to link the daily struggles of the masses against the capitalists to the program for proletarian revolution through a system of transitional demands stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat. In intervening in the workers struggles, we hold to the words of Lenin:

> "It is the task of the Social-Democrats [i.e., revolutionary socialists], by organizing the workers, by conducting propaganda and agitation among them, to turn their spontaneous struggle against their oppressors into the struggle of the whole class, into the struggle of a definite political party for definite political and socialist ideals."
>
> —"Our Immediate Task" (1899)

How keenly such a fight is needed has only been underscored by the eruption of a mass class battle in Southern California just days after the recall election. Seventy thousand members of the United Food and Commercial Workers have been on strike or locked out since October 11; just days later, mechanics who have been working without a contract for over a year shut down the L.A. transit system.

The grocery store workers are acutely aware that behind this contract battle stands an attempt by the bosses to break the core of their union. A central issue in both strikes is health care. The burgeoning health care crisis in American society is one of the clearest examples of the inability of the capitalist system to address even the basic needs of the workers and oppressed. A revolutionary party must intervene into the ongoing struggle to point out that the workers could mobilize massive support for the strike by calling for *free, quality health care for all*—including undocumented immigrants—and *free transit for all*. As Leon Trotsky wrote in the Transitional Program, "There can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses' living standards...every serious demand of the proletariat and even every serious demand of the petty bourgeoisie inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state." For a workers party that fights for a workers government!

The Two Property Parties of the Bourgeoisie

Whereas the Democrats are inclined to at least talk about co-opting and deflecting discontent from below, the Republicans are shameless Robin Hoods in reverse: no taxes for the rich; cuts, layoffs, union-busting for the working class. In his campaign, Schwarzenegger went after the workers compensation and unemployment systems, promising to lower business costs—that is, cut aid to injured and unemployed workers. He garnered support from racists through his denunciation of Bustamante for accepting big donations from Native American tribal gambling interests. And he capitalized on anti-immigrant chauvinism by denouncing Davis' signing of a law to allow undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. Given the enormous role played by Latino immigrant labor in the economies of both California and Mexico, it is no wonder that the election of the "Terminator" is a hot topic in Mexico, where the newspaper

Woods/Newsday

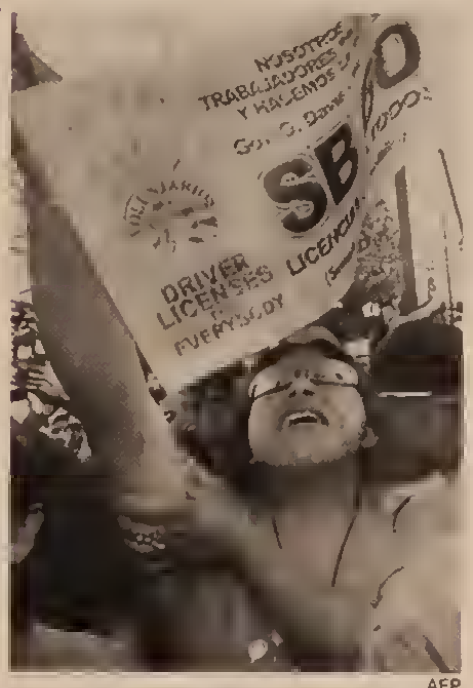
Pench/Sacramento Bee

ISO enthusiastically supported Green Party candidate Ralph Nader in 2000, gushes over Camejo (right) in 2003, promoting illusions in reformability of capitalism.

Ovaciones (8 October) headlined: *Braceros* [Mexican laborers] in Arnold's Cross Hairs: TERROR! Rise of Hitlerian Actor Means Millions of Mexicans in California at Risk."

Two factors rang the death knell for Davis and the Democrats. Having vetoed the driver's license law—a law we Marxists fiercely defend as a minor extension of rights for immigrants, whittling away at their "illegal" status—twice before, Davis looked hypocritical by signing the bill in a play for the Latino vote, which went 46 percent for the recall and only 52 percent for Bustamante (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 October). Davis lost the anti-immigrant wing of his supporters over the driver's license issue (opposed by some 70 percent in exit polls), and infuriated millions by hiking car registration fees to outrageous levels—a regressive tax that we Marxists oppose.

This was scarcely, however, an unalloyed victory for the Republican right that launched the recall campaign in the first place. When the recall made the ballot, the Republican campaign was hijacked by its more mainstream wing



AFP

Latinos celebrate Gray Davis' signing of bill allowing "illegal" immigrants to get driver's licenses—about the only good thing to come out of the California elections.

represented by former governor Pete Wilson and former Reagan/Bush Sr. cabinet member George Shultz. Their candidate, Schwarzenegger, was spurned by the more extreme bigots, the born-again, anti-abortion, anti-homosexual "family values" types who favored conservative Republican Tom McClintock. (The Pete Wilson wing restricts itself to more "moderate" reaction, like the notorious anti-immigrant Prop. 187 that denied education and health care to undocumented workers, and the racist anti-affirmative action measure, Prop. 209.) Schwarzenegger won the election partly by campaigning as a quasi-Democrat, because he is not intransigently opposed to all abortion rights for women (he advocates restrictions like banning some late-term abortions and supporting "parental consent" laws), appointing Democrats among his advisers and advertising his marriage to Maria Shriver (a member of the Kennedy clan), touted as Arnold's "secret weapon."

Significantly, Proposition 54, which would have banned government collection of statistics that document race, was defeated by a vote of 64 to 36 percent. The Spartacist League called for a "no" vote on Prop. 54 as a racist ban on the gathering or publication of statistical evidence of the discrimination endemic in capitalist America. As a testament to the depth of that discrimination, the desperation of the black population came out in the election in a grim "lesser-evilism": two out of three black voters even backed Bustamante—a man known for public racist slurs against blacks, while nearly three out of four (73 percent) black voters opposed the recall of pro-death penalty Davis.

The Syphilitic Chain of Class Collaboration

Helping out the labor tops in misleading the workers and oppressed were a range of self-proclaimed "socialist" organizations, which through support for one shill or another end up in a syphilitic chain of support for the Democratic Party. By providing this policy of subordination to the bosses' parties with "leftist" justifications, these fake socialists stand in the way of the fight to make workers aware of their class interests. The Communist Party and Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS) were the most overt, loudly campaigning for a "no" vote on the recall—a blatant vote of confidence in the Democratic Party and its current government in Sacramento. Workers World Party was one step removed, calling for a vote to the left-radical Peace and Freedom Party—which called for a "no" vote on the recall.

Another wrinkle on the sellout was presented by the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), which, in an article titled "California Recall: The Coup Inside the Circus" (*Revolutionary Worker*, 21 September), cast the recall as part of a national right-wing Republican conspiracy which began with the impeachment of Clinton in 1998. Ignoring the widespread and justified hatred of wage-slasher Davis, the article ended with an appeal that "this bizarre episode of 'democracy in action' is a wake-up call to everyone that we need a new and massive resistance—to deliver a resounding NO!, to make it clear that in our millions, we are not going to tolerate their punishing, imperial plans for the people of the planet." Readers logically concluded that the "resounding no" was meant to be a vote against the recall of Davis. Uncomfortable with such blatant opportunism, some individual RCPers have told us that their "real" position was...not to vote at all.

During the war against Iraq the RCP established the "Not In Our Name" (NION) coalition in order to draw in liberal, pacifist youth without challenging their false belief that war could be ended without abolishing capitalism. The NION "Pledge of Resistance" does not mention the words capitalism or imperialism and speaks only of the need to "make common cause with the people of the world to bring about justice, freedom and peace." Within NION contingents, the RCP's youth would sometimes posture with red flags and militant chants, but without challenging the moralistic, classless (and ultimately pro-Democratic Party) politics on which NION was based. With their article on the recall, the RCP continues to tail the NION constituency, whatever their "r-r-revolutionary" posture, proving once again that Maoism (a variant of Stalinism) is nothing but a rationale for class collaboration.

The International Socialist Organization (ISO) opted to "oppose" the two capitalist parties by abstaining on the recall and then, after much coquettish flirting, enthusiastically embraced another *capitalist* party, the Greens, in the person of "progressive investment banker" Peter Camejo, who placed fourth in the election with 222,121 votes. *Socialist Worker Online* (3 October) declared Camejo "A real alternative in the recall circus." Also tailing Camejo is the grossly misnamed Socialist Alternative (affiliated with Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers' International): "With California labor leaders failing to provide an alternative, despite serious weaknesses in his program, a vote for the Green Party candidate Peter Camejo is the best way of demonstrating opposition to all candidates of both major parties, and the need for a working class alternative to the crisis."

Is this for real? Camejo, who used to be a stockbroker at Merrill Lynch, is the co-founder of Progressive Asset Management, a financial investment firm that recommends investment in "good" capitalist firms. Some working-class alternative! Camejo doesn't even give lip service to socialism, as supporters of the Spartacus Youth Club pointed out when ISOers uncritically hailed him at a campaign rally at San Francisco State University on October 2. At this rally, Camejo, a no-show, was represented by a fellow Green: a San Francisco *assistant district attorney*, whose job it is to prosecute the black and Hispanic poor for breaking the capitalists' laws. As Camejo's Web site says, "The Green Party is the party of law and order." It calls to "Amend the 'three-strikes' law so that it is applied only [!] when the third offense is a serious or violent felony."

ISOers were embarrassed by Camejo's cloying support to Democrat Bustamante. At a debate in Los Angeles, "Camejo also came close to endorsing Bustamante, saying he would be a better governor than Davis or the Republicans running to replace him," wrote the *San Francisco Chronicle* (10 September). At a forum in East San Jose on September 21, Camejo declared: "I'm happy to sit here with Cruz Bustamante and say, maybe, finally, we're going to have someone who is not a European-American male as governor" (*San Jose Mercury News*, 22 September). No doubt the ISO's unease was fed by its own ambivalence over the vote on the recall: some members advocated a "no" vote to keep Davis in office, as did many Greens as well.

But it's not just that Camejo serves as a shill for Bustamante. The Green Party is a capitalist party with a capitalist program. The Green platform calls to "minimize the exportation of jobs to other countries." This means support to flag-waving trade protectionism, pushed especially by the labor bureaucracy. A major theme of Ralph Nader's campaign as the Green Party's presidential candidate in 2000 was strident China-bashing, combining a reprise of Cold War anti-Communism with scarcely disguised "yellow peril" racism. Such chauvinist protectionism also serves to aid Ashcroft's anti-immigrant witchhunt.

As for the Green Party's calls for "the

creation and spread of local currencies and barter" and "consumer items that would contribute toward economic autonomy for individuals," these eccentric reactionary positions are pitched to layers of the petty bourgeoisie concerned with ecology and small-scale production. This anti-industrial stance is fundamentally anti-working-class, dreaming of a long-gone pre-industrial age, an America of small farms and small businesses...and rural idiocy and backwardness.

In fact, the ISO argument in favor of a vote for Camejo has its own contradictions. In its "Where We Stand" column, the ISO states, "We do not support candidates of capitalist parties like the Democrats or Republicans." But in its praise of Camejo, *Socialist Worker* never claims that the Greens are *not* a capitalist party, and when asked, individual ISOers contradict each other on the question. The gist of the ISO argument is never about the class line, but that Camejo is "a real alternative from the status quo presided over by the mainstream parties" (*Socialist Worker*, 3 October). He provides them with a "movement" to work in.

ISOers who want to claim that their organization really stands for class "independence" should contemplate the fact that (according to the October-November newsletter of the Northern California CCDS), the ISO in Northern California has joined with the CCDS and Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) in a "Socialist Unity Coalition" which also includes the Socialist Party and Solidarity (the Communist Party has also been asked to join). The DSA and CCDS actually work in the Democratic Party, as do some members of Solidarity!

Just because a party is independent of the Democrats and Republicans does not mean it's independent of the capitalist class itself; after all, few members of *any* party are actually capitalists, who are a distinct minority.

Rather, the point is that it should instead be a ***proletarian*** party. As Trotsky put it:

> "The masses of any bourgeois party are always cattle, although in different degrees. But for us the masses are not cattle, are they? No, that is precisely why we are forbidden to subordinate the proletarian party to a bourgeois party, but on the contrary, must at every step, oppose the former to the latter."

Marxism is premised on illuminating the class content of every institution and the class line in every battle. Opportunists like the ISO instead use as their compass whatever is popular in the petty-bourgeois milieus they mainly inhabit. Whatever the small print in its newspaper says about standing for a socialist revolution, the ISO gives a reformist content to "socialism." A letter in *Socialist Worker Online* (3 October) by ISO Bay Area honcho Todd Chretien states: "Camejo's campaign is raising the right questions and giving the right answers: end the occupation and tax the rich." As for the first, Camejo baldly stated, "We are for the U.N. inspectors. We want to get all of the weapons of mass destruction out of Iraq" (www.votecamejo.org), declaring his support for that den of imperialist thieves (and their victims), the United Nations, when it served as the advance agents of the U.S. invasion to strip Iraq of any means of self-defense. And the Green platform explicitly backs the political aims of U.S. imperialism—Camejo just wants to make the military machine "better" and more efficient: "Develop a new national defense policy with participation by citizen and governmental representatives as well as the military" and "consolidate military functions to eliminate duplication." He also signs on to the Bush government's Homeland Security crackdown: "Increase state funding for additional security of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks." This demand is barely distinguishable from the mainstream Democratic Party.

WV Photo

9 February 2002: Oakland labor-centered demonstration in defense of immigrant rights, initiated by PDC and Labor Black League, was example of working-class mobilization independent of capitalist parties.

In Germany, where the Green Party is in the central government administration, there is a real commingling of Green Party ecologists and the far right, whose anti-immigrant racism the Greens promote on grounds of combatting overpopulation and attendant "environmental destruction." The nominally pacifist Greens, in coalition with the majority Social Democrats, enabled Germany to send troops abroad for the first time since World War II in the U.S.-led NATO air war against Serbia in 1999.

But the Green "magic words" (according to *Socialist Worker*, 3 October) that seem to really bewitch the ISO are: "tax the rich," which "could solve the state's huge budget deficit." This is a utopian fantasy. While Marxists oppose regressive taxation, which would disproportionately fall on the working poor, the ISO and other reformists regard the slogan "tax the rich" as a way of posing the possibility of radically redistributing wealth without getting rid of capitalism, i.e., as a way of pandering to liberal pro-Democratic Party illusions. But the only way to get rid of social inequality is to get rid of the capitalist production system, and what the ISO means when it denounces "corporate America" is rather the petty-bourgeois bugaboo of the mega-corporation. Even if a "tax the rich" measure could get through the legislature (an assembly of the rich!), highly taxed capital will simply flee to more profitable investment environments. More likely, since *they* have state power, the capitalists will mobilize their cops, courts and troops to wage war upon the working class in an effort to drive back up the rates of profit.

Under capitalism the terms of exploitation are determined not by votes in the legislature but by the *class struggle*. Lobbying for a "fairer tax system" is one of the standard ways that the labor bureaucracy *diverts* union members from militant class struggle. The labor bureaucrats oppose and sabotage the class-struggle methods that can win because they do not want to challenge bourgeois law, order and property rights. The exercise of labor's muscle through strikes, shutting down industry for even a few days, could cost corporations and banks billions—that would "tax the rich" with a vengeance!

Sure, the Greens want to *tinker* with the capitalist system. The ISO seems to think that it can trick history and promote socialism by "working within" such a party. However, this is not a new idea. In one instance, the American Communist Party, then called the Workers Party, came close to supporting the 1924 presidential candidacy of Republican Senator Robert La Follette on the Progressive Party ticket as a "third party alliance" seeking to build a farmer-labor movement at a time of widespread agrarian crisis. Trotsky's intervention played a central role in turning the American Communists from this opportunist course of seeking to forge an ongoing bloc with capitalist forces. In "Strategy and Tactics in the Imperialist Epoch" (*The Third International After Lenin*), Trotsky polemicizes against this "two-class" party:

> "Classes cannot be tricked. This applies, considered historically, to all the classes and it is particularly and immediately true of the ruling, possessing, exploiting, and educated classes. The world experience of the latter is so great, their class instinct so refined, and their organs of espionage so varied that an attempt to deceive them by posing as somebody else must lead in reality to trapping, not the enemy, but one's own friends."

The U.S. Trotskyist movement was founded by communists who had learned the hard lesson of such attempts at trickery and fakery and been won from it by Trotsky's arguments. Trotsky pointed out that those who sought the "two-class" alliance were thoroughly imbued with skepticism concerning the American proletariat, seeking shortcuts around the hard political fight to *win* the working class to a revolutionary perspective. This skepticism also drives the opportunism of the entire reformist left today, from the Green-chasing ISO to the Third World cheerleaders of the RCP.

Fight for a Revolutionary Workers Party!

Our ***critical*** support to the SWP candidate was yet again underlined when we learned that the SWP had taken a position of not voting—i.e., abstaining—on the racist Proposition 54. Hiding this capitulation to racist attacks behind radical-sounding rhetoric, Britton claimed that Prop. 54's bourgeois opponents promote reliance on the capitalist state—a truly hollow protest from the organization that called for the intervention of federal troops in the 1960s civil rights struggles! That the SWP has by no means changed its colors was reaffirmed by the *Militant* (October 6), which confirmed its profound respect for the capitalist state by claiming that the recent Supreme Court decision on affirmative action showed that the gains of the civil rights movement could not be overturned short of a "massive counterrevolutionary movement." No SWPer we have talked to can answer how they reconcile their position defending affirmative action with their abstention on Prop. 54, which would have banned the information affirmative action policies are based on.

Our position of critical support to the SWP was attacked by the small opportunist Internationalist Group in an article, hastily posted on the Web the day before the election, calling for abstention on the recall and opposing critical support to the SWP. The IG disputes our claim that the SWP defends Iraq against the U.S. imperialist invasion, implying we made it up. Here's one quote from the *Militant* (7 April): "Instead of welcoming the U.S. and British armies as liberators, many Iraqis have resisted the invasion. They defend their country's sovereignty and should be supported by working people around the world." The IG is willfully blind because their empty sloganeering is nothing but a cover for them to tail the "progressives" in the trade-union bureaucracy. As the IG itself notes, we wrote in our earlier recall article that the SWP's slogan "Bring the GIs Home Now!" is an accommodation to the social-patriotic antiwar movement. But the IG likewise denounces our call "U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!" as "barely distinguishable" from the SWP's slogan. What is the IG for, "Troops Stay"?

Furthermore, the IG denounced us for our critical support to the SWP because its call for a "workers and farmers government" and a "socialist world" is just "Sunday speechifying." By this logic, the only electoral support one could ever give to a reformist or centrist formation is *un*critical support, sowing illusions that such groups really do have a program to fight for socialism. We would like the IG to explain, then, why Lenin in *"Left-Wing" Communism—An Infantile Disorder* advocates that communists pursue various tactics (including critical support) toward the British Labour Party, whose vague "socialist objective" was the epitome of such "Sunday speechifying."

But the IG is not really interested in Marxist principle. This pseudo-leftism has another purpose. Most revealingly, the IG claims that the SWP program is "barely distinguishable" from that of the Socialist Equality Party, that organization of dubious political handits. (We suspect that the SEP's 5,915 votes come from its candidate having the same name as Democratic State Senator John Burton.) The IG willfully ignores the fact that ***the SEP called for a "no" vote against recalling Davis***, which is one step removed from open political support for the Democrats, while the SWP called for a principled "yes" vote. In fact, the IG itself, by abstaining on the recall—given a viable option on the ballot which at least could register support for working-class political independence from the capitalist parties—also gives ***backhanded support to the Democratic Party***.

Tellingly, the IG went into a conniption fit two years ago when *Workers Vanguard* made a simple statement of fact: "To her credit, black Oakland Congresswoman Barbara Lee, a protégé of former liberal Congressman Ron Dellums, registered the sole vote against the resolution giving Bush a blank check for war"—when the Democratic Party as a whole was cheering on Bush's "war on terror." This was denounced by the IG as "uncritical lauding" of Barbara Lee, whose stance merely reflected her black and working-class constituency in Oakland. But in the California elections, like the ISO, which also advocated an abstention on the recall, the IG is afraid to vote against the Democrats.

Throughout the course of the California recall election, the crucial point for us was how to use the heightened political interest as an entry point for our revolutionary program. We insisted on no vote to any capitalist party, and called for a vote to Britton as a statement against capitalism and war. Every other left group failed the test, either groveling outright before the Democrats or taking their place a step or two or three removed. But we told the truth: What's needed is the forging of an internationalist workers party to fight for the American socialist revolution. Join us! ■

CORRECTION

In "California: Vote Yes to Recall Davis!" (*WV* No. 810, 26 September) we incorrectly implied that Gray Davis set up the California Anti-Terrorist Information Center (CATIC) during the lockout of longshore workers last fall. However, it was set up before that. As we wrote at the time that the sinister role of CATIC came to light, "CATIC was set up and is run not by the Bush administration, but by the governor, Gray Davis, and state attorney general Bill Lockyer, both Democrats, who made it a centerpiece of their re-election campaigns last year" ("'War on Terror'=War on Workers," *WV* No. 805, 6 June).

WORKERS VANGUARD

ISO Enthuses over Capitalist Greens

The California Recall and the Left

Republican action movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger is now the governor-eleet of California following the October 7 vote that recalled Democrat Gray Davis from offiee hy a margin of 55 to 45 percent. Tbis victory to a candidate who eampaigned explieitly against "illegal" immigrants and trade unions as "special interests" will he touted as giving Scbwarzenegger the mandate for layoffs, hudget cuts and union-husting that the despised Gray Davis lacked.

Davis and his party are no less an enemy of working people and the oppressed tban are Schwarzenegger and the Repnblicans, hut you would never know it from the $10.8 million tbat the AFL-CIO threw (unsuccessfully) into beating the reeall, or, failing that, eleeting Democrat lieutenant governor Cruz Bustamante in Davis' place. Despite tbese massive efforts, many union members stayed home; union households barely backed Davis by 51 percent and split almost evenly between Scbwarzenegger and Bustamante.

The trade-union bureaucracy (who would sell their grandmothers for a lunch invitation to the governor's mansion) hobble tbe mobilization of workers power against the capitalist class enemy tbrough endless preaebing tbat the "ballot box" is workers' salvation. As a core component of the capitalist Demoeratic Party, whieb tbey portray as the "friend" of blacks and lahor, the AFL-CIO tops seek to eement tbe political allegianee of lahor to the racist capitalist system. The fundamental task of revolutionaries in the United States is to break the multiracial proletariat from tbe stranglehold of Democratic Party "lesser evilism" and to forge a revolutionary workers party that will fight for a workers government to overturn tbe capitalist profit system.

The Spartacist League viewed the reeall election as an opportunity to present our revolutionary program to the working class and tbe oppressed. As we explained in "California: Vote Yes to Recall Davis! No Vote to Capitalist Parties!" (*WV* No. 810, 26 September), we advocated a "yes" vote to recall Davis as a vote of working-class opposition to the capitalist Demoeratic Party and a vote for Socialist Workers Party candidate Joel Britton, tbe one candidate on tbe hallot whose campaign drew even a crude class line against eapitalism and war. (Britton got 655 votes in the election.) Our vote to Britton was from a perspective of *critical support*, not least because the SWP is virtually uncritical of the trade-union bureaucracy. While it calls for "a fighting working-class alternative to the twin parties of imperialist war and occupation," these are empty words short of

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Ciudad Juárez, Mexico

Capitalism and Anti-Woman Terror

We reprint below a translation of an article printed under the Mujer y Revolución (Women and Revolution) *masthead from* Espartaco *No. 21 (Fall-Winter 2003), newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM), section of the International Communist League.*

In tbe last decade and a balf, some 500 young women have disappeared in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico; among these cases 370 are registered homicides showing a pattern of torture, mutilation, rape, burning and/or strangulation of the victim. Most were dark-skinned, thin, and had long hair. Many worked in *maquiladoras* [foreign-owned faetories produeing for tbe export trade]. Several groups of vie-

ESPARTACO

Mujer y Revolución

tims' relatives have organized to try to find tbe disappeared and not let them be forgotten. A reeent report by Amnesty International, as well as several books that have been published, have detailed negligenee on the part of the government and the poliee in investigating these crimes. After receiving aeclaim in Europe and parts of the Americas, tbe powerful documentary *Señorita Extraviada* [Young Woman Missing], produced by Lourdes Portillo in 2001, was finally shown on Mexican television in Septemher.

Ciudad Juárez, a border city in the state of Chihuahua, is known for these hrutal anti-woman crimes, hut unfortunately what is happening there is not unique. Articles in different local papers in the *maquiladora* zone in tbe north of the country and even in cities like Monterrey testify to several cases similar to those which continue to he reported in Juárez. On September 15 *La Jornada* reported that "the homicides of young poor women, with traces of rape, are mounting in Argentina, southern Spain and Guatemala. Impunity is the norm and official responses range from ineffieiency to hints of complicity."

AP

Mexico City, November 2002: Protesters demand investigation into murder and disappearance of over 300 women in Ciudad Juárez (above). Crosses mark location where corpses of eight young women were found in 2001.

There has been a series of statements about the dead women of Juárez which blame the young women for what happened to them! Francisco Barrio, former governor of Chihuahua and current coordinator of tbe PAN's [governing National Action Party of President Vieente Fox] congressional deputies, said that the killings bappen because "tbe girls move around in certain places, bang out with a certain type of people." Jorge López Molinar, former assistant attorney general of Chibuahua, said that the possihle solution would be the "self-applieation of a curfew." On September 27 a man found the hody of a woman who had been strangled with a purse belt; she was seminaked witb her pants and underwear helow her knees and her blouse above her hreasts. The hody was that of 29 year-old Erika Pérez. The Cbihuahua attorney general, José Silva Solís, declared that "she was not sexually attacked and died of an overdose"!

Anyone who knows something about Mexico knows that male chauvinism rules in this country of capitalist exploitation and oppression. The churcb inculeates tbe suhservient role of women; there is no democratic right of abortion; violenee against women happens in *six out of every ten* bomes. Working-class and peasant women are doubly oppressed, as tbe slaves of slaves.

Víctor Ronquillo, in bis book *Las muertas de Juárez* (1999) [The Dead Women of Juárez], describes the hatred against women and notes that the murders represent a threat to every woman:

> "The way in which the bodies are abandoned, the traces of torture, the vestiges of a personal rite: the right breast cut off and the left nipple bitten off. Fire immolates the victim. All this reveals a message whose designated recipients are the next victims."

The Border Zone: Imperialist Superexploitation

In 1960 Ciudad Juárez was a small town of 250,000 inhabitants on the border with the U.S. Today, it has a population of over 1.2 million people, attracted by

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 813

7 November 2003

Victory to the Transit, Supermarket Workers!

L.A. Strikers Defiant

Defeat Union-Busting Attacks! No to Binding Arbitration!

LOS ANGELES, November 4—As nearly 80,000 workers in Southern California go into their fourth week on the picket lines, the strikes by supermarket workers and L.A. transit workers are reaching a critical stage. These strikes have the potential to rock all of Southern California with class struggle and to point the way forward for workers around the country. But to do so, they must be strengthened and extended.

Some 70,000 supermarket workers at 859 stores represented by seven United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) locals have been out since October 12, fighting huge takebacks demanded by the Vons (owned by Safeway), Ralphs (owned by Kroger Co.) and Albertsons supermarket chains. On October 14, the third-largest transit system in the country was brought to a standstill by a strike of 2,000 mechanics in the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU); 6,000 other transit workers—bus and train drivers organized in the United Transportation Union (UTU) and clerical, custodial and tool room workers organized by the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU)—whose contracts have also expired are honoring the ATU picket lines. Additionally, tens of thousands of L.A. County workers organized by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 660 have been working without a contract since September 30. On October 28, they held a 2,000-strong rally against a county proposal to freeze wages and to shift health care costs onto the workers, declaring, "We're drawing the line!"

With L.A. convulsed by major strikes, now is the time for the county workers to walk out, displaying a united proletarian fist against the bosses and underlining that it is labor that makes L.A. run.

But in their efforts to appease the Democratic Party city bosses, the union tops are undermining rather than extending the strikes. On Friday, the ATU is scheduled to vote on a rotten "last, best and final offer" from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). This insulting offer should be resoundingly rejected, as the ATU leadership is urging. But the answer is not to push for binding arbitration, as ATU president Neil Silver is advocating, which would place the fate of the union in the hands of the capitalist government's "mediators." Many ATU members on the picket lines are rightly worried about the likely decision of an arbitrator, and some have commented that it's ridiculous for anybody to go back to work while all three transit unions are without a contract. The ATU might take a lesson from the sanitation workers who withdrew their petition to

continued on page 8

Wells/L.A. Times

Transit workers picket MTA headquarters in L.A.

"War on Terror" Means War on Immigrants, Blacks and Labor

Perez/El Diario-La Prensa

We print below a presentation, edited and abridged for publication, by Spartacist League Central Committee member Ed Clarkson at an October 11 SL forum in Chicago.

I want to begin by touting the most recent issue of *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*, which includes the *amici curiae* brief of the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on behalf of Jose Padilla. It's a great brief; among other things, it contains a concise history of the United States in terms of the particular issue of democratic rights, as well as our past efforts in this regard. But in the specific, it is the defense of a particular American citizen of Puerto Rican descent, who was born here, arrested on American soil, and has been held since May of 2002 without charges, access to his attorney and without any prospect of a hearing or trial, or any opportunity to challenge his accusers—supposedly because he is an "enemy combatant." Indeed, the brief itself is a call for his release, because we think he is guilty of nothing, as far as we know. More generally, of course, the brief in this regard is a defense of the rights of all American citizens: the right to an attorney, to trial by jury, to confront their accusers; rights I would say most American citizens still think they possess.

Now, under slavery, in 1857, there was the notorious Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court. Justice Taney declared at that time, speaking for the court, that blacks "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." In the aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center, and under the aegis of the hallucinatory "war on terror," a war without a nameable enemy or a conceivable end, in a world dominated by imperialist capitalist oppression, the Bush administration bolstered by the Patriot Act—which was, incidentally, overwhelmingly passed by both parties in Congress—in essence declared that American citizens have no rights the government is bound to respect. But we are not just concerned with the rights of citizens here. As revolutionary Marxists, Trotskyists and internationalists, our aim is to educate the world's working people in their historic, and every day more important, mission of overturning the capitalist imperialist order and forming socialist societies based on production for human need, not profit. To that end we devote all our energies to building the international proletarian party necessary to accomplish that task.

Now, since September 11th, over 5,000 immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries have been detained in one fashion or another. As with Dred Scott, the courts have generally held that these people have no rights. Our programmatic response to anti-immigrant oppression is simple: Extend

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Canada

Bigots in Frenzy over Same-Sex Marriage

Full Democratic Rights for Gays!

Wattie/CP

Supporters of right to same-sex marriage staged counterprotest as religious bigots rallied in Ottawa, August 23.

SPARTACIST CANADA

We reprint below an article from Spartacist Canada *No. 138 (Fall 2003), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada, section of the International Communist League.*

The image of Canada as a tolerant, "gay friendly" country where you can smoke pot unmolested by the cops (if you're white) may be consoling to some, but it's a far cry from reality. The door opened for gay couples to marry when the Ontario Court of Appeal struck down the common-law definition of matrimony in June. The B.C. [British Columbia] Court of Appeal did likewise in July, and the federal government introduced a bill to legalize same-sex marriages. With this, a wave of bigotry against homosexuals has rolled across the country.

Deeply divided over the issue, the federal Liberals [ruling bourgeois party] have gone all out to prevent gay marriage being legalized. Their earlier appeal against the Ontario case stalled it in the courts for months. They are still appealing a 2002 Quebec decision in favor of gay marriage. Now they are referring their own bill to the Supreme Court to ensure it's "constitutional," i.e., doesn't bar religions from viciously discriminating against gays. A revolting mélange of reactionary anti-gay, woman-hating outfits will be granted official "intervener" status in this case.

The Catholic church is leading an all-out war on gay rights, uniting Muslim and Hindu clerics and the demented religious right. A highly inventive crackpot from "Canadians Against Same-Sex Marriage" raved, "Will it mean that if a man wants to marry his dog, he can legally? If a grandmother wants to marry her cute little grandson, can she?" ([Toronto] *Globe and Mail*, 25 July). In the Vatican, the Pope and High Inquisitor Ratzinger cursed same-sex marriage, calling to ban it everywhere. Priests across Canada inveighed against it from their pulpits and a Calgary bishop threatened [Prime Minister] Jean Chrétien with eternal damnation if he approved gay unions. George W. Bush intoned that gay marriages in Canada would not be recognized and threatened a constitutional amendment to bar them in the U.S.

For the bourgeoisie, marriage is "one man on one woman for life." Period. What drives the bigots nuts is that for gays to attain marriage would give homosexuality a modicum of acceptance it now lacks. Precisely because the institution of the family is a central prop in capitalist society, the right to marry is an important *legal* right. Married couples are accorded legal, social and medical protections denied to many common-law and gay couples. These include access to your partner's medical insurance and pension benefits, the right to choose a partner from another country and live together, the right to adopt and have some protection against the state tearing your children from you because of your sexuality. Everyone, regardless of marital status, citizenship or sexuality, should have access to things like free medical care and decent pensions. It is an indictment of this society that such things are only accorded to those who do not breach the sanctimonious "moral codes" enforced by the ruling class on the exploited and oppressed.

We communists are committed to full democratic rights for gays and we welcome any legal advances that can be wrested from this cruelly bigoted society. We oppose all the laws and conventions that discriminate against gay people, including those barring marriage. Yet the right to marry is, for gays, a paradoxical and contradictory gain. The institution of the family, held forcibly together by "holy matrimony," is the main source of oppression for women as well as gays. The patriarchal family decreed monogamy for the woman in order to determine the inheritance of private property, ensuring a man's wealth and property passes to his own offspring. Anti-gay bigotry flows from the stereotyping decreed by the sexual division of labor in the family and its resultant, hypocritical "morality."

It's more than a little ironic that as the number of "traditional" marriages falls—now only about 70 percent—gay marriage is gathering steam. In Quebec, where approval for gay marriages is highest, the marriage rate is the lowest in the country and close to 60 percent of children are born "out of wedlock." Last year the *Globe and Mail* editorialized in favor of gay marriage, declaring that "the state's interest is in supporting the commitment and stability, imperfect as they are, that marriages can help nurture" (30 July 2002). Others piously speak of gay monogamy and marriage "for life." Little wonder many gay activists are deeply conflicted by the question of marriage rights. The U.S. *Advocate* captured this well:

> "Within our community, many see this opening for marriage as the shining pathway to equal rights under the law. Others see it as the antithesis of liberation, the epitome of assimilation, forever short-circuiting the progress we have made in winning new forms of legal recognition and protections for families that don't come with all the negative baggage of marriage. And still others are ambivalent, downright confused, or both."
>
> —Advocate.com, 29 July

Legal marriage will do little to stop the bigotry and violence faced by gays and anyone else who steps outside the stifling boundaries of bourgeois morality. "Coming out" remains a dangerous gamble, especially for teens, and certainly for those in the suburbs and small towns where there isn't even a veneer of "tolerance." The 2001 beating death of Aaron Webster in Vancouver, the brutal gay-bashing of Robbie Petersen in New Brunswick, the suicide of Hamed Nastoh, 14, after repeated homophobic harassment despite not being gay are the tip of a large iceberg.

Prominent gay NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] politician Svend Robinson, who has been baited viciously in the hallowed halls of parliament, recently wrote about these horrible crimes. But his solution is...stronger "hate crime" laws. So the cops who harass and arrest gays are supposed to take special note of anti-gay violence? In Vancouver, Canada's supposed gay Mecca, the largest number of "hate" crimes is against gay men and the cops are notorious for their contemptuous indifference to the victims of these crimes. "Hate crime" laws strengthen the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state used to keep the capitalists in power. Calling for them only fosters illusions that the

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The October Revolution of 1917

TROTSKY

LENIN

November 7 (October 25 in the old Russian calendar) marks the 86th anniversary of the 1917 Russian workers revolution, led by the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. In a 1942 speech, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon described the significance of this defining event of the 20th century, underscoring the Trotskyist Fourth International's uncompromising defense of the conquests of October 1917. Undermined by nearly 70 years of Stalinist betrayal, the Soviet Union was ultimately destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. The International Communist League fights to forge parties modeled on Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks to lead the struggle for new October Revolutions around the globe.

The Russian Revolution proved three things for all time.... First, it proved that the party and the leadership necessary for victory can be created by the proletariat, as they have been created by the Russian proletariat.

Second, the Russian Revolution proved...that the system of nationalized industry and planned economy, introduced by a Soviet revolution, is superior, more progressive, more productive, than any device of capitalism, whether democratic or fascist.

And the third thing which we can say is demonstrated by the revolution, and proved now in the test of war, is that only one class is capable of solving the great social problems of our epoch. That class is the proletariat.

The Fourth International, with its program and its tactics anchored to these three propositions, has been proven correct by the whole test of events. Therefore, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the revolution, we do not change our course. We see not only the Soviet regime's terrible weakness, which derives from bureaucratic mismanagement and control. We see also the strength and the power which derives from the revolutionary origin of the Soviet Union and its basic conquests.

—James P. Cannon, "The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution" (8 November 1942)

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After Four Years in Racist Prison Hell

Tulia Victims Freed, Finally

AP

Thirteen Tulia frame-up victims at court hearing, June 2003.

On August 22, Texas governor Rick Perry issued pardons for 35 of 38 people convicted in 1999 on hogus drug charges in the Panhandle town of Tulia. (Of the other three, one was released on appeal and two others were convicted on supposedly unrelated charges.) The case had gained international attention, particularly through *New York Times* columnist Boh Herbert's publicizing the atrocious frame-up. While the overwhelmingly hlaek defendants breathed sighs of relief that four nightmarish years were over, the faet remains that *none* of the 38 should have ever spent a day in jail, ever been arrested, ever had their lives devastated in a frame-up that resulted in some 10 percent of Tulia's black population—and half the town's adult hlack males—hehind bars. House after house in what local raeists still call "N----rtown" was left empty, and virtually every hlack family in Tulia was affected.

Despite this welcome move to let those victimized finally get on with their lives, what happened in Tulia remains a partieularly blatant indictment of the U.S. government's raeist "war on drugs," which is aimed first and foremost at hlack people. At the same time, the faet that the Tulia victims were finally vindicated and freed shows that the various wars—"war on terror," "war on drugs," etc.—carried out hy the Bush/Ashcroft administration do not always go their way.

The "investigation" hy narcotics agent Tom Coleman, had it not had such ruinous effects, would have heen laughahle. Coleman's work on the case was marked hy sometimes wildly inaccurate physical descriptions of those arrested, discarded records, "reports" written on his body and unsubstantiated and uncorroborated testimony. Further, the eops found no illieit drugs in the houses of those arrested. More still, Coleman's "evidence" was further discredited when defense lawyers for the Tulia victims revealed earlier this year that samples of the eocaine Coleman had submitted to the state narcotics lab had a purity as low as *1 to 2 percent* (eocaine sold on the street typically has a purity of 60 to 75 percent).

Coleman's professional life has heen marked by financial dishonesty, racism and abusive behavior. Even Coleman's former hoss, Cochran County sheriff Ken Burke, told the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement that "Mr. Coleman should not be in law enforcement if he's going to do people the way he did this town" (London *Independent*, 20 August 2002).

In spite of tbis record, most of the 46 arrested were given astonishingly severe sentences through the efforts of District Attorney Terry McEachern and racist juries out for blood in what Freddie Brookins Sr. of Tulia's NAACP ehapter aptly deseribed as a "kangaroo eourt." The word of a white eop—even a paranoid, violent, clearly incompetent one—was sufficient to saddle the defendants, represented hy underpaid, overworked puhlic defenders, with sentences of up to *434 years* in the case of a white man married to a black woman (who herself got 25 years). The Texas state government, at that time headed hy George W. Bush, gave its stamp of approval hy naming Colenan the Texas "Lawman of the Year"!

The nature of the "war on drugs" finds a particularly concentrated expression in Texas's regional nareotics task forces, of whieh the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Traffieking Task Force, Coleman's employer at the time of the Tulia travesty, is one. Their activities have heen so egregious that even some right-wingers in the Texas state house like Republican Terry Keel of Austin eomplain that "These task force operations are so nebulous and so uneonnected to any accountable directly elected official that they just go off on their own" (*Texas Observer*, 14 March). The diffuse nature of these task forces' relationships to various police forces and local governments ean be seen in a recent lawsuit filed by two of the Tulia victims, which names 26 counties and four cities that partieipated in the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Traffieking Task Force. Indeed, the atrocity in Tulia is emblematie of the particularly vicious nature of the "war on drugs" in the Amerian South.

It is hardly surprising that such task forces have been running amok. In Texas these hodies are formally *ad hoc* and draw their income from federal grants ($27.5 million), local and state eontrihutions ($10 million) and, significantly, from asset forfeitures resulting from arrests they make ($7 million). In order to sustain themselves, the task forces plunge into urban areas, relentlessly target black people and minorities and flout even such protections as bourgeois law grants in search of large numhers of arrests to report and assets to convert into yet more money for further rampages. Will Harrell of the Texas American Civil Liberties Union describes the activity of the task forces as follows:

> "The Panhandle Regional Narcotics Traffieking Task Force and its kin are structured as unaccountable extra layers of hureaucracy that behave as free agents, financed by federal grant funds, and don't report to any elected government body. Most of them focus too much attention on low-level drug stings in poor, minority neighborhoods.... And many of them perform racial profiling on Texas highways, using traffie stops as a pretext to search cars randomly for drugs."
>
> —*Dallas Morning News*, 26 August

The travesties perpetrated hy these task forces are hardly limited to Tulia. In Hearne, Texas, an informant set up 28 people, and in Wimherley a task force raid killed a suspect thought to have sold a paltry half-ounce of marijuana on two occasions. Nevertheless, an attempt to rein in the task forces at the state house, sponsored hy Keel, foundered this summer. For at least the next two years, the vast majority of these state-sponsored vigilante gangs—including the Panhandle task force—will continue to receive state funding.

Texas has a justly infamous reputation for heavy-handed racist law enforeement. The cops and Klan have historically heen heavily interpenetrated, and Texas as usual leads the eountry in the numher of executions this year. This is, however, a question of degree. What happened in Tulia—what the task forces have done and eontinue to do throughout Texas—illustrates in concentrated form what the "war on drugs" is all ahout. The Tulia defendants, some of them parents, many of them with no prior criminal records, most of them poor, even in their moment of vindication have to return to lives damaged hy the nearly four-year ordeal which kept them from jobs, family and loved ones.

In the U.S., the special oppression of black people is integral to the maintenance of capitalist class rule and the exploitation of the working class as a whole, and drug laws are used to herd a whole generation of black youth into prison. In the inner cities, minor drug charges have played a major role in entangling as many as one in three black men in the criminal "justice" system, while in the more isolated countryside, roving gangs of nares are quite capable, as Tulia graphically indicates, of literally decimating black communities. Merely getting rid of the task forces, which are proving such an embarrassment to even some "law and order" politicians, will not solve the prohlem.

The point is not to merely attempt to curh the worst excesses of a system that produces Tulias and has put over two million people—disproportionately minority—behind bars, hut to get rid of it. The Democratic Party, which at times seeks to portray itself as an ally of black people and workers, has every bit as much stake in the capitalist system as the Republicans.

It was Democratie president Bill Clinton who ordered the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1996 to strictly enforee the "one strike you're out" law in public housing, which mandates the eviction of any tenant in publie housing if they—or any guest of theirs—are eaught using drugs anywhere. And hlack Democrats like Jesse Jackson Jr. play a prominent role in promoting the racist rulers' onslaught in the inner cities in the name of "drug prevention." The Spartacist League calls for the decriminalization of drugs, so that like smoking tobaeeo and drinking alcohol they will merely he bad for you.

The capitalists have many means of squeezing, railroading and repressing working people and the oppressed, and the "war on drugs" is not the least of these. But black people, as a strategic section of the American working class, are not helpless in the face of these assaults. The working class, which has both the ohjective interest and social power to take down the eapitalist system, can and must take up the fight against the "anti-drug" crackdown as part of fighting for the rights of all the oppressed. To bring the working class' social power to bear, a political struggle against the Democrats and their hangers-on in the trade-union hureaueraey is needed. A key to this struggle is forging a revolutionary workers party that will light for an egalitarian socialist future that will relegate judicial atrocities like Tulia to a past that will look strangely barharie to generations more fortunate than our own. ■

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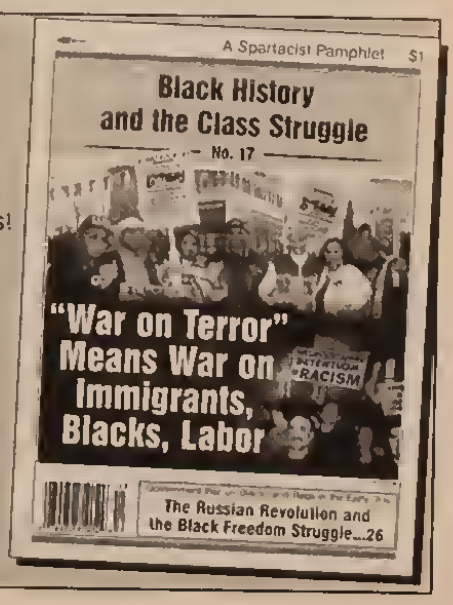

Young Spartacus

Spartacus Youth Club Speaker at Columbia Rally

Down With the Patriot Act!

Some one hundred people came out to an October 23 Columbia University demonstration hosted by the campus ACLU to protest the USA-Patriot Act and support immigrant student rights. The student ACLU organizers courted Democratic Party city council politicians Margarita Lopez and Bill Perkins, who sent a spokesman. Also endorsing and speaking at the demonstration were representatives of various immigrant groups, the graduate student unions from NYU and Columbia, the Columbia Anti-War Coalition and the International Socialist Organization (ISO). The SYC intervened at the rally, speaking and carrying signs including "'War on Terror' Means War on Immigrants, Blacks, Labor!" and "Break with the Democratic Party of War & Racism! For a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!"

For the ACLU and its Democratic Party friends, a common theme was that the Patriot Act is unpatriotic, as if the Patriot Act is at odds with what American capitalism embodies: two million people—disproportionately minority—in prison, cop rampages through the inner cities, the racist death penalty, demonization and deportation of "illegal" immigrants. They made it clear that they did not oppose the Patriot Act as a whole by building support for NYC Council Resolution 909, which calls for repealing only those provisions "that unduly infringe on civil rights and liberties." Tellingly, the ACLU draped the U.S. flag over the speaker's podium. This blood-drenched imperialist flag has no place in a protest in defense of immigrants or working people! Several speakers from immigrant groups recounted horrifying stories about attacks on immigrants and their purge from New York colleges and universities.

Young Spartacus

SYC at ACLU-sponsored demonstration on October 23 to protest Patriot Act.

The ISO speaker said he wanted to "offer a slightly different perspective of why we should oppose unequivocally this attempt by our government to criminalize dissent." "Slightly," indeed. The fact that the ISO refers to the U.S. government and the Bush administration as *our* government indicates that the ISO identifies with the capitalist ruling class that it simply seeks to pressure to be nicer. The ISO table prominently featured a "We Need a Movement to Stop Bush" placard—this can mean nothing other than attempts to bolster the fortunes of the Democratic Party, like those politicians at the rally. The ISO speaker ended his speech with the liberal cry of "No justice, no peace," but the truth is there can never be justice or peace until capitalism is overthrown by a successful socialist revolution. We need a workers movement to smash the rule of capital! We print below the slightly edited speech of SYC speaker Erica Jones.

* * *

The USA-Patriot Act, which has the support of both the Democrats and Repuhlicans, makes as its principal target immigrants, minorities, labor and all political opponents of racist U.S. imperialism. War, racism, attacks on immigrants and the working class are what capitalism is all about. A socialist revolution is the only solution to end capitalist oppression and imperialist war. The fight for immigrant rights goes hand in hand with the fight against black oppression, which is the key issue that keeps labor divided. We in the Spartacus Youth Club strive to mobilize the multiracial working class as champion of all the oppressed, much like we did in February of 2002, when we helped build a labor-centered united-front protest in defense of immigrant rights, in Oakland. This protest centered on the powerful longshoremen's union and brought out labor, immigrants and defenders of democratic rights. As Marxists we understand that the stripping away of democratic rights is rooted in the class nature of the capitalist state. Such examples can be seen in the Patriot Act, which has been used to do everything from monitor what hooks you check out of the library to withholding student visas to targeting Palestinian activists against Zionist repression, such as the L.A. Eight and Farouk Abdel-Muhti.

Patriot II seeks to take this repression even further by asserting the government has the right to disappear people and take away citizenship, much like what is currently happening with the case of Jose Padilla. Seizing on the September 11 criminal attacks on the World Trade Center—which killed thousands of innocent civilians—the Bush administration backed by the Democrats embarked on a preemptive global war against "terrorism," creating havoc and killing thousands first in Afghanistan and most recently with the imperialist war in Iraq. Without the military might of the Soviet Union existing anymore, the U.S., unchallenged, wants to assert its bloody, imperialist drive to dominate and enslave the world. It is clear that by labeling the bureaucratically deformed workers state of North Korea part of the "axis of evil," the U.S. capitalist rulers want to see what occurred in the Soviet Union, where a socialized planned economy was destroyed and replaced by capitalist starvation, also happen in the remaining workers states of the world. We in the Spartacus Youth Club, unlike the so-called International Socialist Organization who didn't mention a peep about socialism today, defended the Soviet Union against counterrevolution. Today, and also in distinction to the ISO, we defend the remaining deformed workers states of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam against counterrevolution, including North Korea's right to bear nuclear arms and to defend itself against imperialist attack.

A tool of government repression is to declare political opponents of government policy terrorists. The "war on terror" campaign was initiated by laws under the Clinton administration, such as the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which has been responsible for the deportation of hundreds of immigrants and quickening the pace of executions of the disproportionate number of blacks and Latinos already on death row. The working class must break with the Democratic Party of racism and war. Remember Bay of Pigs, Korea, remember Vietnam! Down with the Patriot Act! For full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Down with the imperialist occupation of Iraq! And if you hate capitalism and think that socialism is the only way forward, join the SYC. Black rights, immigrant rights—same struggle, same fight! Workers of the world, unite! Remember Bay of Pigs, remember Vietnam! Democratic Party, we know what side you're on! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

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CHICAGO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

November 12: **Trotsky and the International Left Opposition: The Fight Against the Degeneration of the Russian Revolution**

U of C, Cobb Hall, Room 107
5811 S. Ellis Ave.

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
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Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

November 8: **The Economics of Capitalism**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
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NEW YORK CITY

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November 11: **The Bolshevik Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power**

Columbia University
Kent Hall, Room 405

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
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Ontario Institute for Studies
in Education, Room TBA
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NEW YORK

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Drop the Charges Against Hostos Student Activist Miguel Malo!

On 15 August 2001, Miguel Malo was arrested at Hostos Community College in the Bronx for holding up a sign in the school's "free speech area" protesting cuts in Spanish and bilingual education. Two years and 26 court appearances later, the CUNY administration still salivates at the idea of making an example of Malo. He has been targeted because he is an activist in defense of immigrant rights on the overwhelmingly minority campus and a student leader. (At the time of his arrest, he was the Hostos Student Senate vice president; he is now president.) The administration's agenda: to stifle all protest so they can, without challenge, continue to slash and burn education for minorities and the oppressed. Malo's attorney, Ron McGuire, explained (*Caribbean Life*, 20 May):

> "At campuses like Hostos and City College [in Harlem], when students protest there's a fear of domestic insurrection. They call out this incredible security force. We have gotten documents about their deciding whether or not they need to wear guns to control the students. There's a very intense kind of racial profiling going on, and that's what Miguel is caught up in."

Malo has been charged with assault on two Hostos "peace officers," resisting arrest, disorderly conduct and harassment. Numerous faculty and student witnesses saw that it was the other way around—seven campus cops threw him to the ground, leaving him with injuries to both wrists and forearms and with welts across his back. He could face up to a year in prison if he is convicted. *Drop the charges against Miguel Malo!*

The case's history shows the prosecutors repeatedly lying and suppressing evidence. The administration and the District Attorney have "amended" their story and their charges over and over, refused to turn over their videotapes of the protest where he was arrested, failed to bring key witnesses to court and have even gone so far as to attempt to have his lawyer thrown off the case.

For the court's part, they refuse to provide Malo with a translator and have even demanded that he write an affidavit about what happened, a violation of his Fifth Amendment rights. If that doesn't make it obvious enough that the state is on the side of the administration—the campus representatives of the ruling class—then the arrest of two students, Moises Delgado, a supporter of the Internationalist Group, and Javier Genao, inside the courthouse at Malo's September 25 hearing makes it transparent. Genao was arrested for wearing a sticker solidarizing with Malo, and Delgado was arrested for inquiring about the arrest of Genao! Charges of disorderly conduct were again manufactured in the service of political repression. *Drop the charges against Moises Delgado and Javier Genao!*

As the Partisan Defense Committee stated in a letter of protest to the Bronx County District Attorney (2 October):

> "It is no coincidence that the more than two years of persecution of Miguel Malo have seen vicious wars and brutal occupations abroad. Mr. Malo's situation is a domestic reflection of U.S. imperialism's drive to suppress all in its way and is symbolic of the 'democracy' that can be expected in America's colonies and neo-colonies."

The fact that Malo was arrested before September 11 graphically displays that political suppression and oppression of minorities didn't begin with the "war on terror" but is endemic to the capitalist system. Educating the sons and daughters of black and immigrant workers has been deemed unwanted overhead for decaying American capitalism. For black youth, the racist ruling class no longer sees it worth "wasting" money on them even to keep them alive, let alone to educate them. The Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Spartacist League demand free education, open admissions and state-paid living stipends—for all students. The fight against attacks on education is part of our program to smash this racist capitalist system and replace it with an egalitarian socialist society.

James Tinmarco

Protest outside Bronx courthouse in solidarity with Miguel Malo at his hearing on September 25.

Malo's trial date has been set for November 24. Join the rally across from the Bronx County Community Courthouse, on 161st Street, and demand: Drop all charges against Miguel Malo!■

Canada...

(continued from page 2)

government which foments anti-gay bigotry can be a vehicle for liberation. Laws passed to "protect" gays today will be used against them, the working class and other oppressed minorities tomorrow.

The backlash against gay marriage comes on top of a years-long state-run anti-sex witchhunt aimed at regimenting society and instilling fear and guilt. Gay men are especially targeted, but the dragnet includes teachers who have sex with their students, adults who have consensual sex with youth, those who like pornography and youth, who, according to the state, should be abstaining from sex, not enjoying it.

An aptly titled series in the gay newspaper *Xtra*, "Getting the Criminal Code Out of Your Sex Life," details a panoply of laws criminalizing consensual sexual activity. Sex with more than two is illegal, so the Taboo Strip Club in Montreal was raided in May, as were bathhouses in Calgary and Edmonton. If you're under 18, or under 21 if more than two people are involved, then anal sex is illegal. Mere possession of "child" pornography is a crime. In Vancouver, John Robin Sharpe challenged Canada's anti-porn laws after he was charged for possessing his own short stories and photos depicting nude teens kissing. Infuriated when he was finally acquitted, the cops went on a fishing expedition, dredging up someone who claimed to have had sex with Sharpe over 20 years ago when underage. Sharpe now faces frame-up "indecent assault" charges. Stop the state witchhunt of John Robin Sharpe! Cops, courts, government out of the bedrooms!

The only principle that should govern sexuality is effective mutual consent, nothing more and nothing less. We oppose the reactionary "age of consent" laws and indeed all attempts to legislate sexuality. The Trotskyist League and our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. are proud of our decades-long defense of NAMBLA (North American Man/Boy Love Association), hounded by the state for speaking out on the explosive issue of sex between youth and adults.

A measure of the hysteria over this issue is that today the article "Men Loving Boys Loving Men," first published in the Toronto gay newspaper *Body Politic* 25 years ago, is once again in the dock. In 1997 Ontario teacher Narcisse Kuneman was convicted for possessing the article and some critiques of it; today in arguing against Kuneman's appeal the crown prosecutor asserts that mere possession of the article is a crime under Canada's draconian anti-porn laws. *Body Politic* was subjected to a wholesale state vendetta for printing the article, which described the sexual experiences of several men with youths under the "age of consent" and made the simple assertion that such relationships are not inherently abusive. From jackboot cop raids on the paper's offices, to repeated, unsuccessful efforts by prosecutors to secure convictions under "obscenity" laws, the most elementary civil rights were shredded in the service of a vicious and far-reaching witchhunt. We actively joined the fight against this onslaught, declaring "Defend the *Body Politic*!" and calling on the organized labor movement to take a stand in defense of gay rights.

Two decades ago, raids on bars and bathhouses and anti-porn busts were met with huge protests. Today the raids still happen but the protests have vanished. Meanwhile, advocacy of (some) gay rights has gone "mainstream," as shown by the federal Liberals' current stance on gay marriage. Gay Pride Day is a corporate celebration replete with vote-hustling bourgeois politicians who could care less about gay rights. But on the shop floors of factories, anti-gay epithets and violence still occur with sickening frequency. Women in "non-traditional" or industrial jobs are taunted by bosses and co-workers as "dykes"—lesbian or not, you're outed.

Last year, when Oshawa teen Marc Hall had to get a court order to bring his boyfriend to a high school prom, the Canadian Auto Workers went to bat for him. Unions increasingly insist on contract language that ensures equal benefits and rights for gays. These are good developments. But the union leadership, whose flag-waving patriotism and "Canada first" chauvinism bring the reactionary ideology of the capitalist rulers into the working class, can hardly lead a fight for the liberation of anyone from this deeply oppressive system. And while NDP leaders like Robinson and Jack Layton campaign for gay rights, they simultaneously work to buttress the capitalist state and increase its repressive reach. Three years ago, the NDP premier of B.C. was campaigning to *raise* the age of consent to 16.

Our struggle for full democratic rights for gays means a commitment not only to fight against job discrimination and legal inequality, but crucially to mobilize the power of the working class in defense of gay rights. That means struggling for a new leadership of the workers and oppressed dedicated to anti-capitalist class struggle. Sweeping away bourgeois rule and tsarist autocracy, the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution eliminated all laws against homosexuality. Today, exposing and combating every injustice and every outrage, communists fight to forge a revolutionary party that will combat every form of oppression, for this is central to the task of leading the proletariat to power. Only then will we be able to sweep out all the garbage of bigotry and build a socialist society that will make equality and freedom a living social reality for all.■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
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"War on Terror" Means...

(continued from page 1)

full citizenship rights to all immigrants, no matter how they got here.

Zacarias Moussaoui, who seems to have been an Al Qaeda affiliate, but who committed no evident crime, recently was made ineligible for the death penalty and the prosecution in his trial was prevented from introducing evidence relating to the September 11 attacks—by a judge with some respect for existing law—on the grounds that the government refused to allow him to call or cross-examine three witnesses. The Feds are now seeking a reversal of this decision; it would not be surprising if they got one.

Now, I want to qualify whatever admiration I have for this judge by noting that she brightly proposed that Moussaoui instead plead guilty to "conspiracy." Being convicted of conspiracy is sort of like being convicted for having DNA. Unless nobody's ever shared a bad idea with you, we're all guilty. We're for eliminating all conspiracy laws, which simply amount to charging people with "thought crimes."

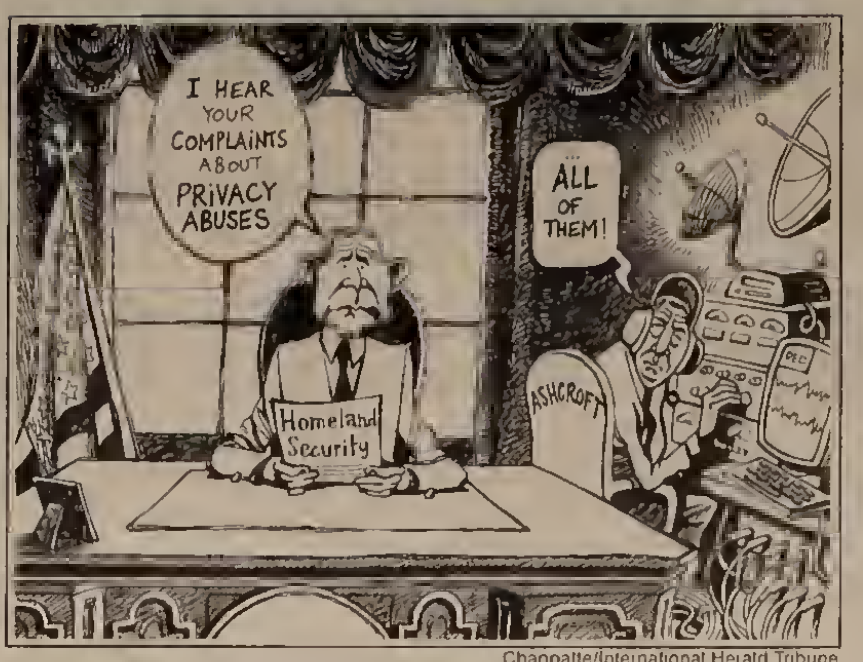
Patriot Act Targets Everyone's Rights

In the immediate aftermath of September 11th, the Spartacist League on September 12th issued a statement that begins by describing the attack on the World Trade Center as "an indefensible act of criminal terror." Then we go on to say:

> "The ruling parties—Democrats and Republicans—are all too eager to be able to wield the bodies of those who were killed and wounded in order to reinforce capitalist class rule. It's an opportunity for the exploiters to peddle 'one nation indivisible' patriotism to try to direct the burgeoning anger at the bottom of this society away from themselves and toward an indefinable foreign 'enemy,' as well as immigrants in the U.S., and to reinforce their arsenal of domestic state repression against all the working people."
>
> —"The World Trade Center Attack," *WV* No. 764, 14 September 2001

A couple of months after the Patriot Act was passed, the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for Social Defense in the Bay Area (these are organizations associated with the SL) organized a united-front demonstration of some 300 on February 9, 2002. At the core of this mobilization were longshoremen, blacks and immigrants, under the following slogans: "Anti-Terrorist Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks, Labor—No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act!" and "Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!"

This, though not such a large demonstration, was nevertheless a model for what needs to be done, and unfortunately remains unique in its thrust and labor centrality to this day. Our appreciation of the focus of the "war against terrorism" and the Patriot Act has proven correct: immediately after September 11 striking teachers in New Jersey were jailed; New York transit workers, who had voted to strike, were threatened with the anti-strike Taylor Law; these unions were characterized as "Taliban" and "jihadist." When the contract expiration for longshoremen on the West Coast approached last year, their leader received a call from Tom Ridge, head of Homeland Security, informing him that a strike could threaten national security. Evidently an armada of Taliban in rowboats had been spotted.



Chappatte/International Herald Tribune

A black woman transit worker in Chicago, Arlene Russell, who had the misfortune of offending some cops by carrying out her job, was jailed and had her fingerprints run against an international "terrorist" database. Fortunately, with union support, she has beaten the frame-up. Now, I simply don't know if Mr. Ridge called the garbagemen in Chicago; certainly Chicago mayor Richie Daley wasn't very fond of the recent strike. The Patriot Act is currently being used to investigate suspected criminals, supposedly corrupt foreign businessmen and suspected white-collar criminals. Who knows what fate awaits ye insidious downloaders of popular music?

The array of legislation and initiatives the government is marshaling in this "war" is breathtaking and marks a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. A Patriot II bill awaits Congressional consideration, with even more draconian measures than Patriot I. Now understand, under Patriot I, as an "enemy combatant," Padilla could have been simply blown away at O'Hare Airport, where he was arrested. This is why, as is detailed in the brief, the SL has fought tooth and nail against any attempt to label us as "terrorists." If you are so labeled you become simply dead men walking in the eyes of the capitalist rulers. Witness the Black Panther Party, labeled as "violent revolutionaries" by J. Edgar Hoover; subsequently 38 of them were simply gunned down in the FBI's COINTELPRO operation. And many others were falsely imprisoned, some of whom are still in jail 30 years later.

Then there's the Terrorism Information and Prevention System, with the cute acronym TIPS. This is "turn in your Mom if she's seen in a long conversation with an Arab-appearing person at the convenience store." This is something Hitler was especially fond of. Fortunately, it doesn't seem to be getting much play. There's the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, recently beefed up at the instigation of New York Democratic Senator Charles Schumer, which gives the Feds fairly unlimited rights to collect and save data on every aspect of your life: what you do, who you sleep with, who you talk to, what you read—everything. Recently, during the course of the elections in Philadelphia, the black mayor had his office bugged: I don't know if the provisions of these acts were relevant in that decision.

After the revision of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, the federal government promised to generate a list of 100,000 terrorism suspects. And then there's the "no fly" list, to prevent suspects—who don't know they're suspects, incidentally—from using air travel, because somebody has labeled them potentially dangerous. So the prognostications in our September 12 statement about the scope and intentions of the "war on terror"—which were subsequently codified into the Patriot Act—were right on.

The Fight for Citizenship Rights in the U.S.

We understand, as Marxists, that the rise of the bourgeois nation-state has a contingent, and not at all inherent connection to the availability of democratic rights to society in general. Such an inherent connection is pushed by apologists for capitalist rule who generally overlook the fact that in most backward countries today—that is, in most of the world—capitalism comes wrapped in the form of some sort of highly repressive regime. Even in the more advanced countries, capitalist rule has appeared in a fascist uniform. Those with some familiarity with Marxism will know that we consider what is commonly known as "democracy"—that is, capitalist democracy—as a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, which means democratic for the ruling class, indeed, and hell for others.

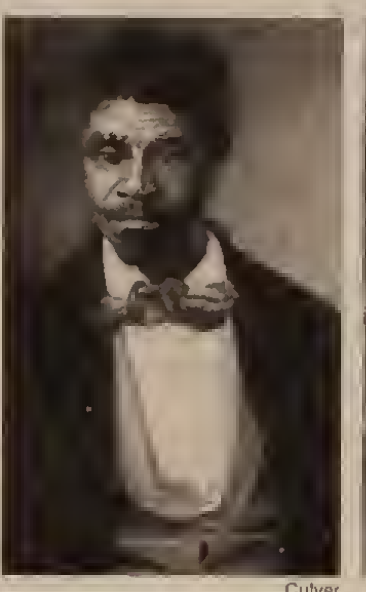
We fight for a workers revolution in order to replace the capitalist system initially with the dictatorship of the proletariat; a democracy for those that toil, combined with such repression against those capitalists who would seek to regain power as is necessary. This as a prelude to a society that would produce all that is necessary and desired by all, for all; at which time all forms of repression of man by man—the state itself—would wither away and disappear, issuing an epoch of freedom in which all would be able to maximize their potential.

It is interesting to look at the history of the United States, in regard to the question of bourgeois democracy, because I think such analysis richly supports the Marxist understanding of capitalist rule. After all, this is the country that is mythologized more than others as the most free in the world. That is not factually the case, but nevertheless it's a common myth.

Now, at its beginning, the original Constitution structurally endorsed slavery. The slaves, who could not vote, were counted in that august document as providing an additional three-fifths to the population on which the number of delegates a state could send to the House of Representatives was based. This assured the South a dominance in national politics it could not have had if based only on free citizens. It should be noted that America had proportionally more black people then; about 20 percent of the population. And that in some Southern states over half the population was black.

The destruction of slavery in the Civil War resulted in the 14th Amendment and also the first definition of citizenship, which had not been defined in the original Constitution. All born on U.S. soil, of whatever color, or naturalized, were citizens. As a result of the Civil War, black people voted during the period that followed that's known as Radical Reconstruction. But in the aftermath of the Compromise of 1877, Reconstruction was betrayed by the Northern capitalists in alliance with the ex-slaveholders. Within little over a decade, black people were again disenfranchised by various literacy tests and property qualifications which had a solely racist intent, and would not recover the vote in the South until the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. Women were accorded the vote in the U.S. only in the aftermath of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, when the USSR became the first major society to grant the franchise to women. And it happened in many other capitalist societies at approximately that time.

Many in Chicago are aware of the Haymarket martyrs, mostly immigrant working-class leaders, largely anarchists, who without a shred of evidence were framed up for a bombing during a workers rally on May 4, 1886. You may not be aware that the government further used the terrorism scare around the time of Haymarket to persecute out of existence the Knights of Labor, one of the first U.S. trade unions of substance. All this occurred, of course, in the heyday of Jim Crow reaction.



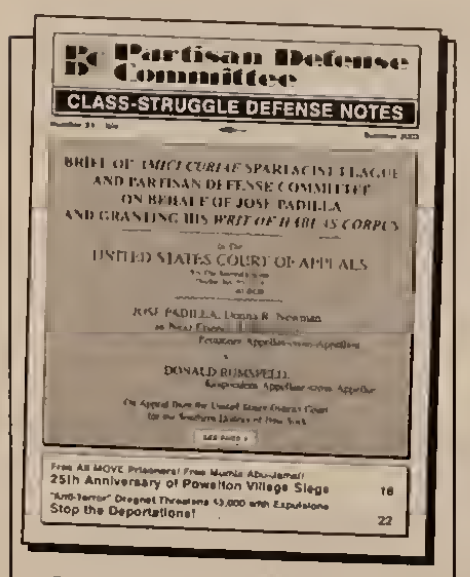
Culver

Harper's Weekly

Dred Scott (left): Supreme Court ruled in 1857 that blacks "had no rights which a white man was bound to respect." Black people voting in the South in 1867 after Civil War smashed slavocracy.

In World War I, sedition laws were used to send the Socialist leader Eugene Debs to prison, for declaring his opposition to the war. And the red scare after the Bolshevik Revolution produced the Palmer raids, in which thousands of immigrants were loaded on ships like cattle and sent back to a homeland many had not known for decades. At the same time, with blacks entering the North and the industrial working class, a wave of racist riots against black people spread through the major cities, including the infamous 1919 Chicago Stockyards riots organized by the white gangs in which Richard Daley Sr. got his start on the road to becoming Democratic mayor of Chicago.

At the beginning of World War II, the Smith Act, supposedly enacted against fascists, was used to send the Trotskyist leaders of the Socialist Workers Party to jail for opposing that war. Japanese



Class-Struggle Defense Notes
No. 31, Summer 2003
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Reuters

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Left: Iraqis rounded up by U.S. occupation forces, August. Right: Prisoners held without charges in indefinite detention at U.S. prison camp at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Americans were rounded up and placed in concentration camps as potential enemy agents. After the war, the U.S. rulers, having effected a brief military alliance with the Soviet Union during the war, moved strongly to establish what one could call "American values." The reds who had built the industrial unions were driven out of the labor movement; Taft-Hartley, severely restricting strike action, was quickly passed; and McCarthy's witchhunting search for agents of the USSR began. Now, in reality this witchhunt was directed against all socialists, of whatever persuasion; it was directed at labor militants, and at those who were for "race-mixing," as it was then described; that is, for integration.

Tens of thousands were victimized during those years. Anti-terror legislation is always anti-working-class at root, and in this country also in the service of racial oppression. The lesson of this history is that rights for most are only forthcoming as a result of class and social struggle. Such rights are quickly subjected to attack and undoing by America's capitalist rulers once such struggle subsides. The elements used by the bourgeoisie in this counterattack are almost invariably in the direction of recasting militancy in opposition to the system as "terrorist," while invoking some insidious foreign enemy or other, and of course with outright appeals to racist bigotry. From our perspective, the only "reform" that will end imperialist war, racial oppression, exploitation and injustice is the revolutionary overturn of the imperialist system through socialist revolution.

The Russian Revolution and U.S. Imperialism

It is not accidental that the October 1917 Revolution in Russia was the focus of the adverse attentions of one of the most powerful capitalist imperialist societies in the world, the United States. Notably, after World War II, the United States killed seven million Asians, first in Korea, and then in Vietnam, in pursuit of its mission to prevent sequels to the October Revolution, that is, the overturn of the capitalist exploiters' rule.

The October Revolution was the first, and to date only working-class revolution which overturned capitalist property relations, established a collectivized economy and in its first actions erased all of the legal restrictions of the old regime against women, against gays and national minorities. The Bolsheviks worked to forge a revolutionary communist international, the Third International, to spread the whirlwind of liberation over the planet, and devoted much of their meager resources to that end.

But in the context of a very backward society, devastated by World War I and by the efforts at counterrevolution afterward, and in the absence of the spread of socialist revolution, especially to the more advanced industrialized societies, a bureaucracy led by J.V. Stalin began to cohere as a caste, in pursuit of its own parasitic interests. Early 1924 marked the qualitative point at which the bureaucratic caste seized political power from the working class—from then on, the people who ruled the USSR, the way the USSR was ruled and the purposes for which it was ruled all changed. It would then take a series of bloody purges through the 1930s for the Stalin clique to consolidate its rule. Throughout, the Trotskyists fought against the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state—for authentic Bolshevism and in defense of the October Revolution.

Nevertheless, what remained in the USSR was a society that was able to provide a job, housing, education, medical care for all, albeit under bureaucratic caste rule. And the fact that it was able to do that shows the strength of the planned and collectivized economy. Those gains persisted until 1991-92 when Yeltsin led a capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR, which has been followed by the devastation of the social well-being of most working people, both in the USSR and in the East European deformed workers states where there were similar capitalist overturns. The power of the October Revolution was also reflected in the ability of a once very backward society to act as a counterweight in world affairs to the ascendant imperialist power, the United States, especially once the USSR had attained an approximation of nuclear parity with the U.S.

Hatalia/SF Chronicle

Police open fire on antiwar protesters and longshoremen at Port of Oakland, April 7.

There remain today societies in which the capitalist class has been expropriated, most importantly in China; also in North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam. Our position on these societies is identical to our position on the ex-USSR and East Europe. We are for the unconditional military defense of these countries against imperialist or domestically inspired capitalist counterrevolutions. We are for proletarian political revolution against the bureaucratic castes that rule these societies, whose policies threaten the gains of the revolutions themselves.

Those of you who are not familiar with us, or with our coherent critique and program to change this blood-soaked imperialist order, come here not just because of a concern with democratic rights, but with an equal concern about the seemingly out-of-control appetites of U.S. imperialism to dominate the economic and political course of all societies on the planet. The real motive force behind the Iraq war is the desire of the U.S. capitalist rulers to maintain and expand the domination of U.S. imperialism particularly in the economically and geopolitically crucial Near East. Ask yourself this question: Could the U.S. have carried out this neocolonial assault without serious regard for the consequences if the USSR still existed? The answer is a flat-out no. No more than the U.S. could have—as it did consider—used nuclear weapons in the Korean and Vietnamese wars because there was a problem here: the USSR might respond in kind. And that gave some hesitation to the U.S. imperialists.

The current seemingly mad aspirations of U.S. imperialism are in no way different from those of the imperialist powers that initiated the conflagration of World Wars I and II. Just as the various imperialist capitalist classes must assure their domination over their working classes domestically, and thus their capacity to ensure continuing and increasing profits, they must assert their dominance over their imperialist competitors. The U.S. capitalists hope to ensure ideological conformity as they continue to ratchet up exploitation and—as has been the case through two decades—to increase the percentage of the national income in the hands of the wealthy, while continuing to cut the living standards of everyone else. Their ability to do so, and to effect repressive legal measures against most of the population, is not determined simply by the existence of legislation, but by whether their efforts are answered by class and social struggle. So we shall see.

Revolution vs. Reform

In this country, especially since the overthrow of the October Revolution in the USSR, those who experience some sort of revulsion to imperialist exploitation and war are far from automatically inclined toward the necessary solution of socialist revolution as embodied in our program. Rather, these people are prone to examine as a first step those that promise to reform the system. In this country, the pinnacle of such promised reform is to be found in the liberal wing of the Democratic Party to which the American trade-union bureaucracy is intimately linked. And then there are those who call themselves socialist—one example in this city would be the International Socialist Organization (ISO)—who in various ways promote the reform of the capitalist order, normally by a capitulation to the liberal Democrats.

The congruence of all these types was expressed in their opposition to the Soviet degenerated workers state, and is currently expressed in their opposition to "totalitarianism" specifically in North Korea, in China, in Cuba, etc. That is their emphasis. This is hardly surprising for the Democratic Party, which is the *other* capitalist party in the American system, and thus supports the prerogatives of U.S. imperialism. In the case of the trade-union bureaucrats, it is an extension of their allegiance to that party, and in the case of the sham socialists, of their opposition to socialist revolution, and adherence to a policy of reform.

Let me return to the subject of democratic rights, and this time proceed from the present to the past. It is interesting to note that virtually all the Democratic candidates for the presidency are running on the platform that Bush has been *soft* on national security. You remember I mentioned Senator Schumer's reforms, so that each of you can be investigated at the touch of a computer key. One wonders what they have in store for us. How much more "secure" could we be? Outside of being actually in lockdown, where you're *very* secure.

Bill Clinton, for example, had his own fondness for the death penalty, even for the brain-damaged (which even the right-wing Supreme Court has found unacceptable). He signed into law the 1996 Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. Most immigrants currently detained by the government, in fact, are held under the auspices of that law, not the Patriot Act. And Clinton's Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act sharply undermined the centuries-old

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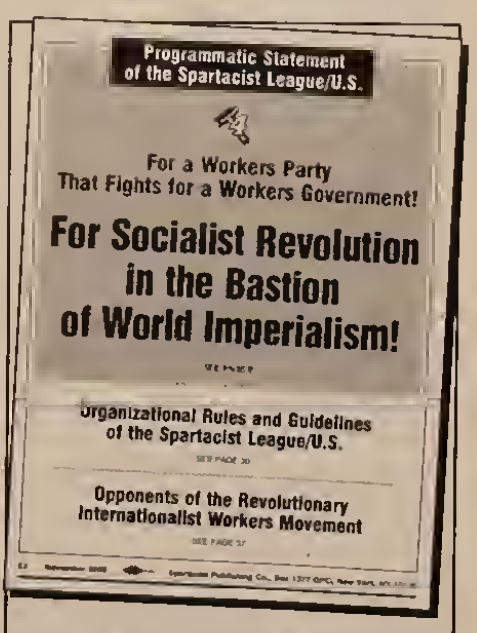

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L.A. Strikes...

(continued from page 1)

the National Labor Relations Board and instead went out on strike just after the ATU and UFCW went out, winning Teamsters representation at Norcal Waste Services in South Bay.

What's needed is for the UTU and TCU to go out on strike, to stop the MTA's scab operations with mass, militant picket lines and to shut down all mass transit in L.A. ***All transit workers in the L.A. metro area should be organized in one industrial union! Strike together, go back together!***

In the case of the supermarket workers, it has been clear from the beginning that the key to victory lies in joint action by UFCW and Teamsters members *to shut down the distribution centers*. There is widespread sentiment among the ranks of both unions to do precisely that. Instead, the UFCW and Teamsters leaders have dismantled those picket lines already in place at two distribution centers—picket lines that were being honored by the Teamsters. This was done at the request of the Teamsters misleaders, who claimed that their members had to work in order to keep their health benefits.

This is a betrayal, not only of the UFCW workers but also the Teamsters. It is reported that the grocery bosses are planning to replace Teamsters truck drivers with non-union "independent" truckers when their contract expires in two years. The dismantling of the picket lines was met with disappointment by many UFCW strikers, with one picket captain at Vons emphasizing to *Workers Vanguard* salesmen how this weakened the strike as a whole.

On October 31, UFCW Local 770 president Rick Icaza grandly announced that the UFCW locals were taking down the pickets at the 300 Ralphs markets in California as a gesture of thanks to the consumers who have been shopping at other markets since the strike began and with the aim, according to the *Los Angeles Times* (1 November), of "focusing pressure on the Vons and Albertsons chains." Public relations doesn't win strikes. Shutting down the flow of money to the bosses does. While the UFCW leadership is trying to play one supermarket conglomerate against the other, the supermarket bosses are standing solid against the workers: the *Times* article spoke of the "possibility that Ralphs might share with Albertsons and Safeway any windfall from being the only one of the chains without pickets."

The UFCW has reportedly threatened to extend the strike against Vons to Safeway stores nationally. If the UFCW is serious about taking this strike nationally, then the key to winning is extending it in California—which means maintaining and reinforcing all the existing picket lines, including against Ralphs. Even now, thousands more UFCW members are on strike in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, while 7,000 members of UFCW Local 700 in Indianapolis are taking a strike vote tomorrow and 15,000 more in Arizona are working without a contract. All these workers should be out now in coordinated strike action against all the supermarket bosses.

A class-struggle strategy to win the transit and supermarket strikes is counterposed to the bureaucrats' policy of abiding by what's "legal" in the eyes of the bourgeois courts and requires a struggle against the bureaucrats' strategy of class collaboration. It is reported that the ATU's suicidal offer to submit to binding arbitration was strongly pushed by Miguel Contreras, head of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, and liberal Democratic city councilman Antonio Villaraigosa, who was elected through the backing of labor and who sits on the board of the labor-hating MTA. This dynamic duo, one a pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucrat and the other a "pro-labor" Democrat, have come out to help the bourgeoisie defeat the strike. In fact, Contreras calls for an end to the ATU strike because it hurts "low-paid members of our (other) unions that are having to walk to work every day" (*Los Angeles Times*, 30 October). This is merely an echo of the bosses' vile propaganda against the transit strikers.

The employers, their Democratic and Republican politicians, their courts and other government agencies are all enemies of the working people. While some Democrats have paid lip service to the plight of the downtrodden supermarket workers, Democratic mayor Hahn is now threatening to reopen the city workers contracts in order to push through new concessions. Against the united front of the capitalists, the workers need class unity in struggle. This poses the need for a class-struggle leadership in the unions based on political independence from the bosses' parties and the bosses' state. ***Break with the Democrats! For a fighting workers party! Victory to the transit and supermarket strikes!***

Bust the Union-Busters!

While the capitalist media nationwide—both print and television—have instituted a virtual blackout, the L.A. strikes have struck a chord among workers throughout Southern California. On October 20, workers from several unions marched and rallied with striking UFCW members at Ralphs in the Crenshaw area, among them Verizon workers from the CWA, AFSCME members, Justice for Janitors (SEIU Local 1877), H.E.R.E. hotel and restaurant workers Local 11 and SEIU Local 99, which represents workers at the L.A. Unified School District. UPS and other unionized drivers regularly honk in support of the mechanics' pickets, and consumers in their great majority have honored the grocery store picket lines. Despite the gridlock and difficulties caused by the strikes, there is widespread sympathy for the workers' fight to defend their health care benefits.

The L.A. strikes should be an inspiration to transit workers in Chicago, who have been working without a contract for over four years, and in New York City, where the bureaucrats knifed a potential strike and pushed through a sellout last December, hiding behind the state's anti-strike Taylor Law. With unemployment on the rise and the economy in shambles, the class battles in L.A. show workers across the country that they can fight back.

Threatening the union's very existence, the supermarket bosses are demanding a two-tier wage system with significantly lower pay and benefits for new hires, the subcontracting out of union labor and the right to open non-union stores in "non-union" areas. According to the president of UFCW Local 770, the bosses are also trying to cut health benefits by 50 percent. The MTA's demands include a cap on its contributions to the ATU's health care plan, leaving workers to pay for increases in rapidly rising health care costs, and a freeze on MTA funding of the retirees' health care plan at the current level, which is already well below what's needed to fund the plan. In announcing its "last, best and final offer" on October 27 after declaring negotiations to be at an "impasse," the MTA, as the *Los Angeles Times* (28 October) noted, was "laying the legal groundwork for hiring replacement workers"—i.e., scabs. Although this won't be easy because of the skilled nature of the mechanics, it is a clear threat to bust ATU Local 1277 and potentially

WV Photo

Picket line outside L.A. supermarket. UFCW, Teamsters: Shut down the distribution centers!

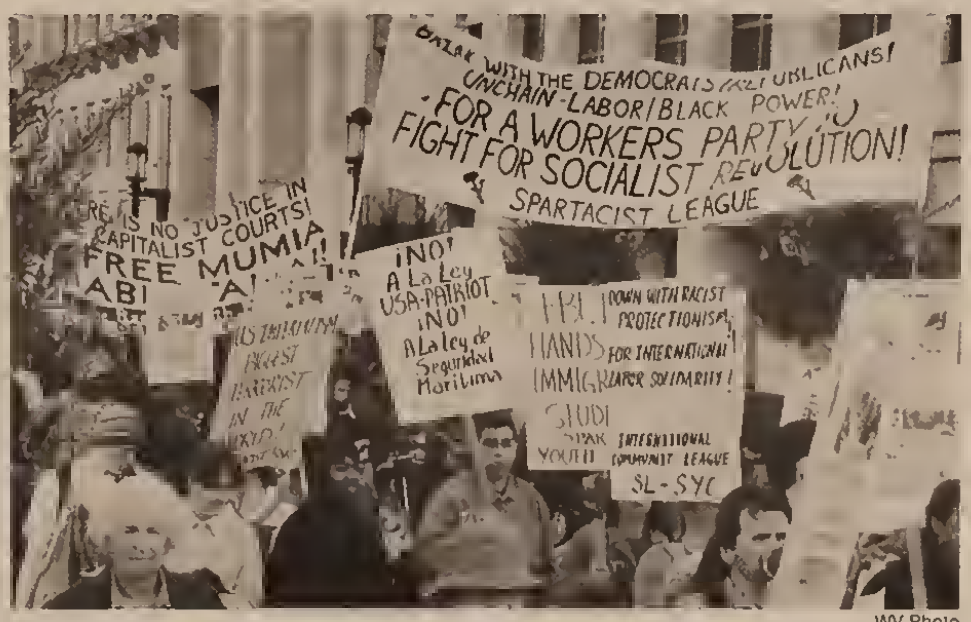
"War on Terror" Means...

(continued from page 7)

right of *habeas corpus*, which includes the right to appeal unjust convictions and demand a hearing and a trial. And this act has allowed the government to deport immigrants based on undisclosed evidence and made it a crime to support even lawful activities of any organization labeled "terrorist" by the State Department. The anti-terrorism act was supposedly passed because of the Oklahoma bombing, which was done by that well-known immigrant, Timothy McVeigh.

Before Clinton, it was Harry Truman, the Democratic supposed "working man's" president, who launched the first Cold War against the Soviet Union and also oversaw the witchhunting in the late 1940s to early 1950s that was known as McCarthyism. To go back further with the Democrats is to locate them as the political expression of Jim Crow rule and of the KKK in the South. And usually during that period KKK members were also, in many Southern towns, part of the Democratic machine.

The Cold War trade-union bureaucracy was initially enseconced in power to replace the reds driven out of the unions in the 1940s, that is to say, it was the government agency within the trade-union movement *for* the purge. Its current composition seems to be mostly lawyers who barely passed the bar exam. It has little notion of class struggle, and while it would be unfair to say that these bureaucrats would never countenance a strike, it is more than fair to say that they will use every opportunity to concede to the prerogatives of capitalist rule.



WV Photo

Oakland, 9 February 2002: PDC and LBL initiated labor-centered united-front demonstration against government's "anti-terror" laws, in defense of immigrant rights.

The trade-union bureaucracy's policy is that of "America first" chauvinist protectionism which divides the working class internationally, and the promotion of the Democratic Party, to which they are intimately linked and obligated. It should be known that the policies of the current trade-union bureaucrats and their immediate predecessors have led to the decimation of the American trade-union movement, which now stands at a historic membership low. And it's even worse than that, because many of the members of the trade-union movement now are cops and security agents, who in our opinion should be tossed out of the labor movement.

Finally, there are those who call themselves socialists, but who think it's principled to cross picket lines when their jobs are in danger, and to call the bourgeois courts into the trade unions to promote "democracy." As if the bosses had any interest in democracy for the working class, and as if further capitalist state control could do anything except annihilate the trade unions.

Currently, with Bush's growing unpopularity, these socialist reformists are increasingly involved in "fight the right" campaigns. "Fight the right" campaigns—what does that mean? Who do you vote for—Do I hear Democrats? That's what they're into. During the Iraq war, these supposed leftists mobilized antiwar youth under the banner "No to war." That is, under the banner of those few liberal Democrats who opposed the war. Our contingents in these demonstrations called for the defense of Iraq against the U.S. neocolonialist war, and for class struggle against the capitalist rulers. This is not a small difference.

I attempted in this forum to outline an alternative worldview for those who are dismayed by the actions—both here and abroad—of our rulers. It is the perspective of class struggle and of world socialist revolution, one opposed to what imperialism ultimately has to offer, which is the prospect of a third world war, this time nuclear. I would encourage those who are motivated to look into these matters deeply. There will be only three possible choices: you can hope all this will fade away and return to normal, although I think that serious consideration will lead one to believe that "normal" is not all that very good; you can fight on the system's terms for reform—hopefully this forum has presented some reason to question the value of such a fight; or, if the fires for justice and human freedom burn brightly enough, you can join us in the fight for a socialist tomorrow.■

the other two transit unions!

Numerous scab operations are being launched against the transit unions: Metrolink rail, which transports suburban commuters, is running buses (under the name Transit Systems) to take passengers from the transit hub to various areas of the city. In addition, several scab outfits are operating from "Prime Time" vans, run by an ex-MTA boss, to buses run by MV Transportation and Orrley. Now, Teamsters-organized drivers for First Transit, who went out on strike one day after the MTA mechanics, have accepted a three-year contract and are expected to resume service on 12 MTA "contract lines" this week. First Transit drivers should stay out until all MTA workers are back on the job!

On October 22, the Bus Riders Union (BRU) community group started to assist the MTA's scab operations. While the BRU claims to be on the side of the workers, it is organizing a "Peoples' Bus Emergency Transit Service," which can only weaken the impact of the strike. To win over the poor, Latino and black masses who depend on mass transit as allies, the transit unions must fight for *free mass transit* and increased bus and rail service.

The current L.A. strikes, where tens of thousands of workers are fighting for decent living conditions for themselves and their families, point to the potential for welding the social power of labor to the anger of the ghettos and barrios. If extended, these strikes could provide a platform for organizing the hundreds of thousands of unorganized, heavily immigrant workers in the L.A. area. But this means that the unions must champion defense of immigrant rights. Last week, the Feds carried out widely publicized raids at Wal-Mart stores in 21 states, arresting over 250 "illegal" immigrant workers (see article this page). In fact, the supermarket bosses falsely justify their demand for takebacks by claiming that they have to compete with non-union Wal-Mart "superstores." The labor movement, including the UFCW, must take up the defense of these Wal-Mart workers, demanding their immediate freedom and opposing all deportations while launching a fight to organize Wal-Mart. *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Break with the Democrats!

The bureaucrats' impotent class-collaborationist policy is exemplified by an "investor conference call" organized on October 30 by AFL-CIO president John Sweeney with the JP Morgan and Smith Barney Citigroup investment firms. Sweeney tried to convince investors that the supermarket bosses' hard line against labor is bad for long-term profits. Wall Street didn't buy it. The capitalists know, as every worker should know, that the interests of the workers and the bosses are diametrically opposed. For profits to go up, the capitalists must increase the rate of exploitation, driving down the living standards of the working masses. The trade-union bureaucrats, who only try to negotiate "fair" terms of exploitation, promote the lie that the interests of labor and capital can be reconciled.

A clear example of the labor tops' fealty to the capitalist system is their attitude toward cops and security guards. The October 28 SEIU rally included hundreds of security guards organized by the SEIU, probation officers organized by AFSCME and other "unionized" cops and sheriffs. This is disgusting. These guards and officers are not workers; they are the core elements of the capitalist state apparatus. Their job is to enforce the bosses' law and order. This means scabherding, repressing social struggle and terrorizing the impoverished ghettos and barrios. Several grocery store strikers have been arrested on the picket lines. And Albertsons is seeking a court injunction to take down the picket lines at its stores. Who would enforce the injunction? Cops and security guards! That the trade-union bureaucrats organize the armed thugs of the capitalist state into the unions reflects the bureaucrats' commitment to defend this system of exploitation. *Cops, security guards, probation officers out of the unions!*

County Federation of Labor head Contreras is considered the leader of the L.A. labor movement. But he spends most union resources on mobilizing the ranks to elect capitalist politicians (or keeping hated ones like Gray Davis in office), not on carrying out the class struggle desperately needed to organize the heavily immigrant working class. In the month-long transit strike in 2000, which stayed solid on the picket lines and beat back a union-busting plan to divide the MTA into "regional transit zones," Contreras called in Jesse Jackson Sr. to defuse the workers' militancy. Jackson preached "reconciliation" with the Democratic Party politicians who run the city and dominate the MTA board and helped ram through a contract settlement that made concessions to the MTA.

Strike support rallies organized by the UFCW have featured Jackson and other Democratic Party politicians. Jackson et al. paint themselves as friends of the workers but do so only to put Democrats in office so that they can get their chance to screw the workers by administering the capitalist system. Jackson openly seeks to direct labor and anti-racist struggle into an effort to get the Democrats into the White House in 2004.

The Democrats run this system in partnership with the Republicans. As these strikes pose the burning need for a working-class offensive against the bosses to fight for the interest of workers and all the oppressed, the first precondition is independence from all capitalist parties. What working people need is a new leadership in the unions that fights for their interests, a leadership forged in class struggle, against the pro-capitalist program of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. This is part of the fight to build a workers party that leads the struggle not just for the immediate interests of the workers but for a socialist revolution to establish a workers government. *Those who labor must rule! Victory to the grocery and transit strikers!* ■

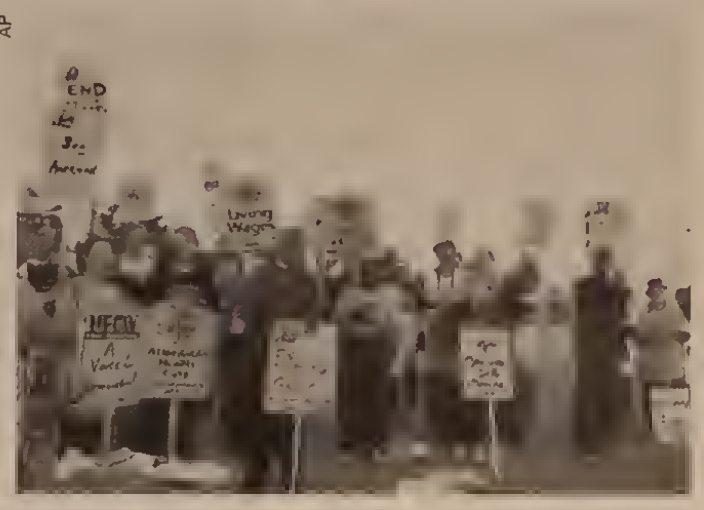
WW Photo

October 17: Other unionists have joined UFCW picket lines in solidarity with strike.

Over 250 Rounded Up by Feds

Labor: Defend Immigrant Wal-Mart Workers!

No Deportations!



AP

Union protest against low-wage, anti-union Wal-Mart chain, Oklahoma City, November 2002.

Just before dawn on October 23, federal agents swooped down in military-style raids at 60 Wal-Mart stores in 21 states, rounding up more than 250 undocumented immigrant workers. These victimized workers, who are mainly from East Europe or Latin America, are now incarcerated, awaiting deportation proceedings. Reportedly, more raids are planned in at least Las Vegas, Nevada. The trade unions and all labor and immigrant rights organizations must mobilize and take action, demanding: *Free the rounded-up Wal-Mart workers! No deportations!*

These workers were working under miserable conditions for meager pay and no benefits, employed by a cleaning contractor colluding with Wal-Mart. The immigrant workers who clean the Wal-Mart stores, horribly abused by the Wal-Mart empire because of their vulnerable status as "illegals," are the lowest stratum of a brutally exploited and oppressed workforce. Their story could sound like a modern-day version of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, except that the forces behind the atrocious victimization are much more sinister, wealthy, vicious and threatening.

The raids were carried out by the new Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency created under the Department of Homeland Security. This makes clear that the bipartisan "war on terror," aimed at immigrants in the first instance, is also ultimately directed against the entire working class. Indeed, the raids can only serve to chill union organizing efforts at Wal-Mart.

Wal-Mart is not only the top U.S. corporation, surpassing even Exxon-Mobil, with revenues of $220 billion and $7 billion in profit each year. With one million employees (three times more than General Motors), it is also the country's largest private employer. The United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union, which is currently engaged in a major Southern California strike, says it is trying to organize the workers at Wal-Mart. But two weeks after the terrorizing raid against the immigrant workers, the UFCW has yet to make one public statement denouncing this victimization, much less take the lead in mobilizing the AFL-CIO and other unions in their defense.

By rising to the defense of these immigrant workers, the UFCW would be mobilizing in defense of *all* Wal-Mart workers, undercutting the company's rabidly anti-union maneuvers and facilitating the organization of Wal-Mart workers. The labor movement must mobilize in defense of immigrant rights and demand: *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants now!*

Marxist Studies No. 9

This volume of *Marxist Studies*, a series of bulletins for the education of Marxist cadres, contains the transcripts of four classes given in 1998-99 throughout the International Communist League dealing with the first four (1919-1922) Congresses of the Communist International. Also included are the list of related readings and a general chronology (1912-1924) of relevant events.

Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, the first four Comintern Congresses addressed the tasks facing the newly formed Communist parties and codified the lessons of the October 1917 Revolution. The decisions of the Congresses provide precious material for those seeking to carry forward the international working-class perspectives of Marxism and fight for new October Revolutions.

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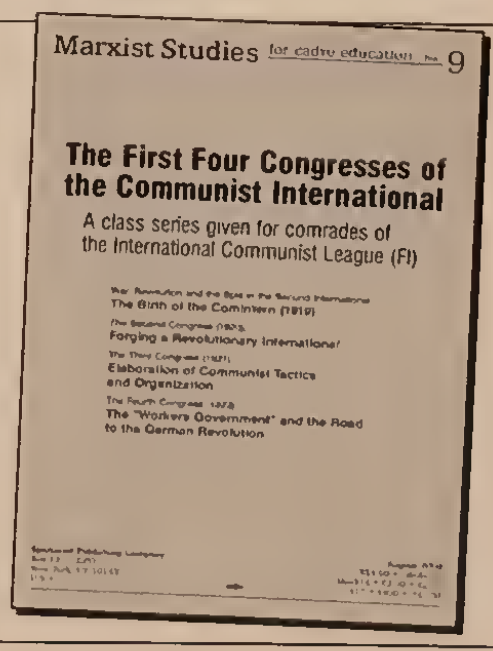


1979 Greensboro Massacre

We Will Not Forget

On 3 November 1979, five union organizers and civil rights activists, supporters of the Communist Workers Party, were murdered in broad daylight at an anti-Klan rally in Greensboro, North Carolina. KKK and Nazi gunmen drove up in a caravan, and with cool deliberation took out their shotguns and semiautomatic rifles and opened a barrage of fire directly into the 100 protesters assembled outside the black housing project of Morningside Homes as horrified news cameramen recorded it live.

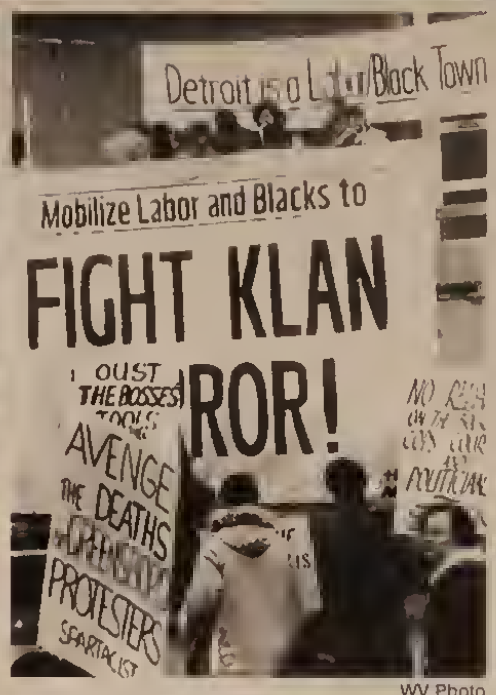
Greenshoro was a conspiracy of the fascists and their capitalist state patrons. From the outset, the KKK and Nazis were aided and abetted by the government, from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent who helped train the killers and plot the assassinations, to the "former" FBI informer who rode shotgun in the motorcade of death and the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear. Two successive all-white juries acquitted the Greensboro killers of all charges, affirming once again the meaning of "justice" in this racist capitalist country.

We wrote in *Workers Vanguard* at the time:

> "Every successful cross burning, every fascist parade through a Jewish or black neighborhood, every courtroom victory in the liberals' campaign for 'free speech for fascists' whets the murderers' appetite for more violence.... This campaign of terror must be stopped. Socialists and militants in the labor movement must call on organized labor to mobilize its tremendous social power, in alliance with black and other minority organizations and the left to stop the Klan in its tracks. No more Greensboro massacres—For massive labor/black action to smash the Nazis and the Klan!"
>
> —"For Labor/Black Mass Mobilizations: Smash KKK Killers!" *WV* No. 243, 9 November 1979

When the Klan announced it would "celebrate" this massacre one week later in Detroit, the Spartacist League initiated a labor/black mobilization that drew over 500, primarily black auto workers, who made sure that the Klan did not ride in the Motor City. In city after city over the following years, when KKK and fascist provocations have arisen, we have repeatedly brought out core battalions of black and working-class militants who understand we can't ignore the fascists and Klan—we must stop them.

Greensboro Daily News



WV Photo

Left: Greensboro survivor Nelson Johnson kneels by his dying comrade Jim Waller. Above: November 1979 Spartacist-initiated labor/black mobilization in Detroit spiked KKK plans to celebrate racist massacre.

Dr. Paul Bermanzohn, a survivor of the 1979 massacre, sent a message to our 23 October 1999 mass mobilization that rode the Klan out of New York City: "Giving the Klan the green light to march in NYC today will only invite more racist actions.... Only an alert, well-organized and strong citizenry can stop these outrages. And a necessary step in that process is to put a stop to the Klan and all it stands for."

Today there's a revolting attempt to bury the bitter lessons of the massacre—a "Truth and Community Reconciliation Project" in Greensboro, modeled after the South African commission which was designed to whitewash the crimes of apartheid-era butchers and torturers. The Greensboro project, unsurprisingly, brags it has "the cooperation of former Greensboro Police Chief Robert White." We bet it does.

It is grotesque to think that justice for the Greensboro martyrs can come from the same capitalist state whose forces helped to orchestrate the murders in the first place. Real justice will only come about when the workers rule America. We honor the memory of the Greensboro martyrs—Cesar Cauce, Michael Nathan, Bill Sampson, Sandi Smith, James Waller—as well as the many others who were severely wounded that November day. And we dedicate ourselves to the fight against fascist terror. The working class in power—the third American revolution—will ensure that there shall be no more Greensboros.

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The first Labor Black Leagues were formed as a result of the Spartacist League-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982. We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

If You Stand For—

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabherding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting; keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Defend the separation of church and state! Down with anti-gay laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom!

6 Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or community control of the police! Down with the racist and anti-labor "war on drugs"! For decriminalization of drugs! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend the deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For proletarian political revolution to oust their Stalinist bureaucracies! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

WV Photo

—Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge is $3/year unemployed; $10/year employed.

For more information, contact:

CHICAGO (312) 563-0441
Labor Black Struggle League, Box 6938, Chicago, IL 60680

NEW YORK (212) 267-1025
Labor Black League for Social Defense Box 2502, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10008

OAKLAND (510) 839-0851
Labor Black League for Social Defense Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Why Being Antiwar Means Being Anti-Imperialist

What everybody knows, after the mass protests that were held in cities around the earth over one-half a year ago, is that the forces of the U.S. government could care less about the popular protests that shook the planet.

They could care less because they do not serve the interests of the people, but the privileged; they do not serve the many; they serve the few. They serve Wall Street; Petroleum Row; Haarken Oil and Hallihurton. In their heart of hearts, "democracy" is a dirty word.

They don't really care about the latest round of protests that are being waged against the war; they have their hands on the levers of power, and they don't want to let go. Those who dared to lie to the American people to start a needless war, could care less that there are millions of people who oppose it. That's why they chose the vehicle of fear, the spectre of "terrorism," to justify the Iraq attack, when every schoolchild now knows that the Baghdad government had nothing to do with the events of 9-11.

But the Bush Regime has used that fear; that anxiety; that sense of being under attack, to stoke the fires of war, and now the U.S. is involved in building and protecting a colony in the heart of the Middle East. That's why it isn't enough to simply say, "Bring the Troops Home," as some have said. For to do so only means, "bring them home today, to unleash them on some other unsuspecting people tomorrow."

That is a recipe for postponing war, not ending it.

War is indeed, big business, but it is more than that; it is a social tool by which governments have always mobilized larger social forces for their political ends. The ends of government? What it has always been—power.

Why do you think the Bushites have unleashed the somber Ashcroft upon the American people? A man who lost a senate election to a dead man is now the ultimate arbiter of who may exercise civil rights in this "new era"? Students are being thrown out of school because politicians don't like their t-shirts. Thousands are locked in dark gulags in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. They are denied lawyers, are being held incommunicado, and face torture. When some have dared to file suits against these fundamental violations of human rights, they are told that because this site is in Cuba, the U.S. suddenly lacks "jurisdiction." What legalized drivel!

If the U.S. doesn't have jurisdiction, who does? Cuba? The UN? Clearly, the solution to the egregious human rights violations in Guantanamo Bay will not be found in U.S. courts, just as the solution to these wars for empire will not be found in anti-war marches.

This is but a beginning; not an end.

To be truly anti-imperialist means to oppose the "soft"-imperialism of the Democrats, and the "hard" imperialism of the Republicans. Both imperialisms are fundamentally wrong, for they begin with the false premise that Americans know best, how other peoples should live their lives, and organize their societies.

One cannot believe in self-determination and imperialism; those two views are incompatible.

To be truly anti-imperialist means organizing, not demonstrations, but mass movements that pose an alternative to the deadly status quo.

It means believing, and fighting for, the idea that another world is possible.

It means thinking of the peoples of this world as the same as us; not "them."

It means the renunciation of white supremacy. It means a foreign policy truly based upon simple humility; instead of domination.

It means a real transformation of the way things are done here; and that means change; revolution. It means this, or it means nothing.

For, if these steps aren't taken, generations will be plunged into bloody and needless wars; wars fought for wealthy elites based on lies, and fear, and greed.

It means the surrender of your children and grandchildren to wars of ignorance. It means, in fact, endless war!

No to Imperial War!

11 October 2003

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Send urgently needed contributinns for Jamal's legal defense, made payable to "National Lawyers Guild Fnundation" and earmarked fnr "Mumia" to: Committee tn Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 130 Morningside Drive, Suite 6C, New York, NY 10027.

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Ahu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Universities...

(continued from page 12)

students, a tuition increase of $950—the amount of the increase this year at the State University of New York—means the difference between staying in school and being deprived of an education. In the California community college system alone, fully 90,000 students were driven out last spring by budget cuts and tuition increases.

In September, Republican members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, sensing a hot election campaign issue, published a report, *The College Cost Crisis*. Rejecting "a dramatic increase in federal funding for higher education," the report took aim at "wasteful spending by college and university management." The unspoken message: Take it out of the hides of university employees. This was highlighted by the strike this summer at Yale, that bastion of racist class privilege where campus workers earn less in one year than students pay in tuition and room and board. Meanwhile, faculty salaries across the country are being driven down as permanent staff have been replaced by part-timers, who now account for more than 43 percent of teaching positions and earn an average of less than $20,000 per year, usually with no benefits.

Black and Hispanic students are under siege today because the capitalist rulers see no need to spend resources educating people they will only employ, if at all, at starvation-wage "McJobs." Both capitalist parties, the Democrats no less than the Republicans, defend the priorities of the ruling class: Spend billions on prisons, weapons and the colonial occupation of Iraq, while shutting down schools, factories and hospitals. Black youth, particularly black men, are rapidly becoming "missing persons" from a society that has locked them into ghettos, with no exit from poverty and a likely stretch in prison other than by enlisting as cannon fodder for the imperialist military. As a result of the "war on drugs," the prison population (over 2.1 million) is now four times what it was 30 years ago. *One in eight* black men between the ages of 20 and 34 is currently behind bars, and 28 percent of all black men can expect to be imprisoned some time in their lives.

UPI

Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957: Black student jeered by rabid white mob as she enters Central High School.

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

In an undated flyer for the November 7 march and a "New Civil Rights Movement" conference that weekend, BAMN crows: "The historic civil rights march on April 1st, 2003 achieved its aim! We did it—we organized, we marched, we fought and *we won!*" To cover for its tailing of bourgeois liberals, BAMN makes it seem like there was a solid wall of opposition from the bourgeoisie to affirmative action.

In fact, an unprecedentedly wide range of bourgeois forces—including 24 states and territories, 65 Fortune 500 companies and many military leaders—submitted *amicus* briefs to the court defending the University of Michigan affirmative action program. In effect, school resegregation has proceeded to such a point that much of the ruling class fears that it will no longer have enough minority managers and military officers. One brief submitted by 29 generals, admirals and U.S. Senators underlined the importance of ROTC programs on college campuses in providing officers for the military, whose ranks are heavily black and Latino. The Pentagon brass frankly acknowledged that before they had a significant layer of black officers, the military's "racial problem was so critical that it was on the verge of self-destruction," noting that during the Vietnam War "racial tensions reached a point where there was an inability to fight."

BAMN's call for a "new civil rights movement" is simply a cloak for a liberal perspective limited to pressuring the capitalists and their courts to grant minimal concessions. The mass of black and white activists who were the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and '60s wrote a heroic chapter in the fight for black equality in racist America, shattering Jim Crow in the South and gaining formal legal equality for black people. However, liberal leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. worked to keep the movement confined within the straitjacket of pressure politics, lobbying for concessions from those sworn enemies of black liberation, the Democratic Party and the capitalist government.

Today, BAMN promotes what was precisely the central *weakness* of the civil rights movement. The platform of the April 1 rally was chock-full of NAACP liberals and Democratic Party politicians like presidential hopeful Al Sharpton. In California, BAMN has concentrated on circulating petitions to pressure the University of California Board of Regents to demand the resignation of notorious black conservative Ward Connerly, who spearheaded the drive for a referendum ending state affirmative action programs in California and is now pushing a similar initiative in Michigan. In appealing to the UC Board of Regents, an institution presided over by the governor and other state officials, BAMN is looking to the very university administration and capitalist government that are axing higher education opportunities for minorities and others.

The same week as the affirmative action decision, the Supreme Court struck down a Texas sodomy law that outlawed gay sex. We are far from indifferent to such occasional nods in the direction of elementary humanism, including by a Supreme Court whose rulings more often read as if they were written by a White Citizens' Council. However, it is illusory to imagine that the road to achieving lasting gains lies through a strategy of pressuring the Supreme Court or other capitalist institutions. Today, as in the past, it will take massive social struggle to gain any improvement in the lives of workers and oppressed minorities in this society.

The starting point is the understanding that it is the multiracial working class that has the social power to lead all the oppressed in struggle against capitalism. We seek to mobilize the working class in a fight for free, quality education and jobs for all, particularly reaching out to the masses of unemployed minority youth and women through special union recruitment and training programs. The main obstacle to mobilizing the power of labor is the trade-union bureaucracy, which ties the proletariat to its class enemy, primarily through the Democratic Party, of which the trade-union leadership is a key component. To unchain the power of labor, it is necessary to ***break*** with the Democratic Party and forge a revolutionary workers party.

Just as it took the Civil War to smash chattel slavery and establish public education for black people in this country, it will take a socialist revolution to sweep away the entire capitalist system and lay the basis for wiping out the centuries-old legacy of racial oppression. Only in this way can the accumulated knowledge and culture of civilization be truly appropriated by those who are today deprived of that birthright.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Defend Affirmative Action and More!

Down With Racist Purge of Universities!

The June 23 Supreme Court decision striking down the University of Michigan's undergraduate admissions point system for minority applicants hammered yet another nail into the coffin of affirmative action. While affirming the notion of "diversity" as a desirable goal, the court ruled unconstitutional one of the programs still available to implement it. At the same time, the judges upheld a more "narrowly tailored" program at the University of Michigan Law School, thus providing a way for colleges to preserve some minimal form of affirmative action. That many liberal proponents of affirmative action have seized upon this to hail the ruling as a major victory for the rights of minorities is nothing less than an admission of their political bankruptcy.

The contradictions in the Supreme Court decision were reflected in the conflicting reactions by black liberals. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund hailed the court ruling as a "victory," as did Jesse Jackson, who declared that it "sets back the assault by the racial and radical right and the Bush Administration to resegregate the nation." In contrast, *Amsterdam News* publisher Wilbert Tatum angrily declared in a 25 June editorial that the court decision "took us 50 more years away from an America that is truly equal under law."

Both Jackson and Tatum imagine that the Supreme Court decision will, for better or worse, fundamentally alter the condition of black people in this country. This is also the view of the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action & Integration, and Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary (BAMN), which is sponsoring a National Civil Rights March at the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus on November 7. On April 1, some 50,000 people turned out for a BAMN-organized rally in defense of affirmative action outside the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., determined to preserve what little access they have in this profoundly racist society to a decent education and a decent job. The turnout demonstrated the depth of opposition to the racist rollback of affirmative action and other programs even minimally redressing discrimination against black people and other minorities. But far from offering a perspective of independent social struggle, BAMN and other liberals seek to channel the youthful fighters for black rights who are turning out for these protests into the dead end of reliance on the Democratic Party, the Supreme Court and other institutions of racist capitalist rule.

A BAMN press release issued the day of the Supreme Court ruling hailed it as a "historic and momentous victory," dismissing as "a minor setback" the court's rejection of the University of Michigan's undergraduate point system. An opinion piece co-authored by BAMN organizer Kate Stenvig in the University of Michigan newspaper the following day, referring to the 1954 Supreme Court ruling overturning legalized school segregation, enthused: "We have saved *Brown v. Board of Education* and are now in a stronger position than at any point in the past thirty years to realize the promise of Brown—integration and equality in American education."

AP

Washington, D.C., April 1: Rally outside Supreme Court in defense of affirmative action drew 50,000.

Make no mistake: While the court did not simply do away with affirmative action, as many feared it might, the ruling creates a significant new obstacle to minority enrollment in law schools, medical schools and the best universities. Not least, administrations will be hesitant to shell out the huge additional sums for increased admissions staff—as much as two million dollars in Michigan's case—to satisfy the Supreme Court's requirements. And though the ruling effectively overturned anti-affirmative action court decisions in Texas and several other Southern states, it will have no effect in California and Washington, where affirmative action was banned in state universities not by federal court decisions but by state referendums. And it does nothing to prevent other states from now instituting their own bans.

Even if the Supreme Court had fully endorsed the Michigan plan, it would still have been nothing more than a retention of the miserable, racist status quo. The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs defend affirmative action in university admissions because it has meant gains, however minimal, against the inherent race and class bias in higher education under capitalism. But as we asserted against the likes of BAMN in an article written before the Supreme Court decisions (*WV* No. 801, 11 April):

> "The stark truth is that there is no way to overcome entrenched racial oppression within the framework of capitalism, in the universities or elsewhere. Affirmative action programs were set up as a sop to *defuse* social struggle and in order to create and co-opt a 'talented tenth' of black middle-class professionals. But these paltry, tokenistic efforts never made a dent in the deep-seated oppression of the black ghetto masses, whose condition has continued to deteriorate over the past few decades."

Young Spartacus

Spartacus Youth Club contingent at UCLA protest against attacks on affirmative action, May 1998.

We fight for *free, quality, integrated education for all*. To provide real access to higher education, we call for nationalizing the private universities and for open admissions and free tuition with a state-paid living stipend for students. We demand full remedial programs at the universities, an end to the racist "tracking" system in the high schools and genuine integration of the schools, including the aggressive implementation of busing. We seek to mobilize labor's social power in defense of even such partial steps toward racial integration and equality as are possible under capitalism, but we do not sow illusions that integration and equality, in education or any sphere of American society, can be achieved through Supreme Court rulings or liberal pressure politics. Full social and political equality for black people can only be achieved through workers revolution and the creation of an egalitarian socialist society.

Racist Rulers to Ghetto Youth: Drop Dead!

Even if the doors of the select universities—those most affected by the Supreme Court ruling—were opened far wider than they are today, most working-class and minority students would still be attending regional state schools and community colleges. There the question of who attends turns less on selective admissions policies and more on who can—or cannot—afford the cost of school. Public universities jacked up tuition by an average of 14 percent this year, the steepest increase in over a generation. Students faced increases of 30 percent at the University of California, 28 percent at the State University of New York and 25 percent at the City University of New York. This is devastating for poor and working-class students, many of whom work full-time and live on shoestring budgets to put themselves through school.

According to U.S. government statistics, 48 percent of college-qualified high school graduates were prevented by financial constraints from attending a four-year institution, and 22 percent from attending any college at all. And the numbers of those shut out from higher education are escalating as state and local governments ramp up tuition and gut funding for these schools and campus administrations fire professors, slash the number of classes and cancel remedial programs.

To gauge the impact of tuition hikes, consider that today almost three-quarters of the 13.6 million undergraduates in this country are what the Department of Education calls "non-traditional" students—that is, they do not depend on their parents for support, or they have returned to school after a number of years in the workforce. More than one-quarter of women college students in this country are raising children while pursuing their studies. For hundreds of thousands of such

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 814 | 21 November 2003

Defend, Extend Gains of 1949 Revolution!
For a China of Workers and Peasants Councils in a Socialist Asia!

China

Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was born of the 1949 Revolution which, despite profound bureaucratic deformations, was a social revolution of world-historic significance. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their forebears had been cruelly exploited from time immemorial. The rule of the murderous warlords and bloodsucking moneylenders, of the rapacious landlords and wretched bourgeoisie was destroyed.

The creation of a centrally planned, collectivized economy laid the basis for an enormous leap in social progress and China's advance from abject peasant backwardness. The revolution enabled women to advance by magnitudes over their previous miserable status, symbolized by the barbaric practice of foot-binding. A nation which had been ravaged and divided by foreign powers for a century was unified and freed from imperialist subjugation.

However, the 1949 Revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime, which represented a nationalist bureaucratic caste resting atop a collectivized economy. Unlike the Russian October Revolution of 1917, which was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat guided by the Bolshevik internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky, the Chinese Revolution was the result of peasant guerrilla war led by Mao's Stalinist-nationalist forces. Patterned after the Stalinist bureaucracy that had usurped political power from the proletariat in the USSR, Mao's regime preached the profoundly anti-Marxist notion that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. In practice, "socialism in one country" in China, as in the USSR of Stalin and his heirs, meant opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally and accommodation to world imperialism.

In particular, China's alliance with American imperialism *against* the Soviet Union, begun under Mao in the early 1970s and continued by his successor, Deng Xiaoping, contributed to the eventual destruction of the USSR through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. This was a historic defeat for the international working class and oppressed peoples throughout the world. The post-Soviet period has seen the increased pressure of world, especially American, imperialism—economic, political and military—on China. Thus the Pentagon has been actively pursuing plans for an effective nuclear first-strike capacity against China's small nuclear arsenal, a strategy openly proclaimed by the Bush gang in Washington.

The International Communist League stands for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. The Chinese working class must sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy, which has gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. We stand for a ***proletarian political revolution*** to place political power in the hands of workers and peasants councils. The urgent task facing the Chinese proletariat is to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party as part of a reforged Fourth International to prepare and lead this political revolution, standing at the head of the toiling masses and directing the spontaneous and localized struggles of the workers toward the seizure of political power.

Migrant construction workers in Beijing set up barricade to protest unpaid wages in January. Below: Chinese president Hu Jintao (then vice president) visits Wall Street in April 2002.

AP photos

Is the CCP Restoring Capitalism in China?

Ever since the Deng regime introduced market-oriented economic "reforms" in the early 1980s, an increasingly influential current of Western bourgeois opinion has maintained that the Communist Party itself is gradually restoring capitalism in China while keeping a tight grip on political power. This position was widely and loudly trumpeted late last year when the 16th Congress of the CCP legitimized party membership for capitalist entrepreneurs. "China Turns Its Back on Communism to Join Long March of the Capitalists" was a typical headline in the Western press, in this case that of the London *Guardian* (9 November 2002).

In fact, this congress did not introduce a significant change in either the social composition of the CCP, which after all has 66 million members, or its functional ideology. According to an official survey, of China's two million private business owners 600,000 are party members and

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"The Cause That Passes Through a Prison"

18th Annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

SEE PAGE 4

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Palestinian Activist Amer Jubran Driven Out of U.S.

BOSTON—On November 6, racist immigration courts and federal agents forced Palestinian activist Amer Juhran into dropping his challenge to government proceedings to deport him to Jordan. He is set to leave in March 2004.

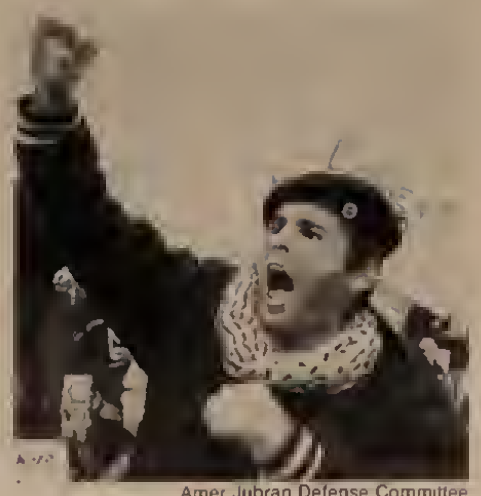
Last November, FBI and INS agents arrested Jubran two days after he led a march for Palestinian rights through downtown Boston. The Feds held him for over two weeks, as government agents tried to dig up enough dirt to expel him from the country. Just under a year later, the government hit Jubran with over 50 pages of new charges only a week before his hearing—based on the prying of a team of at least 12 federal snoops. These charges had next to nothing to do with the original, equally bogus, set that he had initially been arrested on, demonstrating the extent to which Juhran is a victim of a political witchhunt.

After the November 6 hearing, where Jubran was ordered to testify without any legal representation, the Amer Jubran Defense Committee issued a press release stating: "Faced with this nightmare logic, coupled with the prospect of an endless, boundless investigation that would threaten the vulnerable, Amer felt that his only choice was to request voluntary departure."

The relentless persecution of Jubran, his family and associates is part of a hroad government assault against anyone who protests the "war on terror" or the depredations of U.S. imperialism—especially those who speak up in defense of the heleaguered Palestinian people against Zionist state terror. Facing possible deportation, Palestinian activist Farouk Ahdel-Muhti still languishes in a Bergen County jail in New Jersey, well over a year after he was detained in a Gestapo-style raid on his home in Queens. His deportation could result in his being handed over to the Israeli state, which would almost surely mean torture or worse. Meanwhile, recent reports indicate that the government is now using the Patriot Act in renewed efforts to deport two of the Los Angeles Eight, Palestinian activists who have been in the state's cross hairs for 16 years for defending Palestinian rights. ***Free Farouk Abdel-Muhti now! Hands off the L.A. Eight!***

Speaking to a crowd of 60 supporters outside Government Center on November 6, Jubran said he would continue his fight for Palestinian freedom when he returned to Jordan. He said that while he expected that some people there would say all Americans simply want to bomb and exploit them, he would say he knew some very decent people here, like the ones he was addressing. He told the crowd:

> "This is all about speaking on behalf of Palestine, an oppressed people for 55 years who have been pounded by the U.S. government. And we come and live in this country, and we open our mouths, thinking that the rights protect us, thinking that we have due process, that we have the fairness of the justice system to protect our rights. But at the end it turns out that there is no protection, and there *is* a double standard—clearly because I am an Arab and Muslim and am critical of the U.S. government.
>
> "They are using technicalities like immigration to go after people I said hello to 12 years ago, and dig dirt over their head. They are making my presence—if I decided to fight them—a liability for others who are weak and vulnerable....
>
> "I decided in light of seeing that there were no checks and balances, of seeing and understanding that there is no legal system that could protect me and ensure me that there is a due process, then I feel very vulnerable and I feel that this is a place where I cannot live safe, where my staying and my determination to speak justice for Palestine will become punishment for other immigrants, for poor people who are on welfare, for others who cannot deal with the system and its manipulation."



Amer Jubran Defense Committee

We need to mobilize the integrated labor movement in defense of immigrant rights and the democratic rights of the entire population. ***Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Defend the Palestinian people! Stop the deportations! Let Amer Jubran stay!*** ■

Soviet Power and the Rights of Immigrants

TROTSKY

LENIN

Anti-immigrant hysteria has been on the rise in both the United States and Europe, wielded by the bourgeoisie as a club against the working class and the oppressed as a whole. The fight for citizenship rights for immigrants is part of the struggle for the unity of the international proletariat. This was underlined by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. The Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, adopted in 1918, explicitly granted full rights of citizenship to all toilers in its territory.

20. Proceeding from the principle of solidarity of the working people of all nations, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic grants full political rights of Russian citizens to foreigners residing in the territory of the Russian Republic for purposes of employment, and helonging to lhc working class or to the peasantry not employing the labour of others: and it empowers the local Sovicts to grant to such foreigners, without any cumbersome formalities, Russian citizenship rights.

21. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviel Republic grants the right of asylum to all foreigners subjected to persecution for political and religious crimes.

22. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, recognizing the equality of rights of all citizens, irrespective of their race or nationality, declares the eslablishment or toleration on this basis of any privileges or advantages, or any oppression of national minorities or restriction of their equality, lo be contraventions of the fundamental laws of the Republic.

23. Guided by the interests of the working class as a whole, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Repuhlic deprives individuals and groups of rights which they utilize to the detriment of the socialist revolution.

—"Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the RSFSR," printed in Yuri Akhapkin, ed., *First Decrees of Soviet Power* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1970)

Letter

On Dave Lindorff and Mumia Abu-Jamal

New York City
16 November 2003

To the Editor:

In the Partisan Defense Committee statement "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!" (*WV* No. 812, 24 October), author Dave Lindorff was cited, along with filmmaker Michael Moore, as one of those liberals who "ignore the overwhelming evidence that Mumia is innocent and instead speak of his supposed 'guilt'." It was inexact to equate the views of Moore—who says Mumia "probably killed" the police officer for whose 1981 murder he was framed—with those of Lindorff, whose recent article in *CounterPunch* (17 October) criticized Moore for this. In fact, Lindorff has played a far more pernicious role than Moore.

When Arnold Beverly's confession that he, not Mumia, killed Officer Faulkner was finally presented in court after being suppressed for two years by Mumia's former lawyers, Daniel Williams and Leonard Weinglass, Lindorff was an early and loud voice lrashing this clear evidence of Mumia's innocence. His book *Killing Time* (2003) excoriates Mumia for firing the traitors Williams and Weinglass, attacks the competence of his subsequent legal lcam for seeking to present the Beverly confession and calls Mumia "to some extent—as his nemesis, prosecutor McGill, puts it—also 'the architect of his own destruction'." In an afterword coyly titled "So...Did He Do It or Not?" Lindorff says, "I don't think the evidence has ever been there that Mumia Abu-Jamal was a first-degree murderer," then concludes: "But did he actually shoot Faulkner? The answer has to be maybe." No! Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man! In racist America, Moore's and Lindorff's hairsplitting over "probably" versus "mayhe" can only serve to alihi the U.S. injustice system; exposing such lies is crucial as we seek to mobilize the broadest possible forces, centered on the power of the labor movement, to save Mumia from execution and free him from prison hell.

Sincerely,
Paul Cooperstein
for the Partisan Defense Committee

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 18 November.

No. 814 **21 November 2003**

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Alternate Mondays, 5 p.m.
November 24: **Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**
San Francisco State University
Rm. C-116, Cesar Chavez Student Ctr.
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

CHICAGO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
December 3: **The Break with the Communist International and the Struggle for the 4th International**
U of C, Cobb Hall, Room 107
5811 S. Ellis Ave.
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.
November 22: **The Marxist View of the State**
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

BOSTON

Tuesday, 6 p.m.
December 2: **Workers Revolution Needs a Bolshevik Party!**
BU Coll. of Arts and Sciences, Rm. B25A
725 Commonwealth Avenue
(BU East/Central on Green Line B)
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, 8 p.m.
November 25: **Trotskyism vs. Stalinism: The Revolution Betrayed—Defend China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam!**
Columbia University
Kent Hall, Room 405
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

Visit the International Communist League Web site: www.icl-fi.org

Japanese Trotskyists Say:

Japan/U.S. Hands Off North Korea!

We print below a translation of an article which appeared in Spartacist Japan *(No. 28, October 2003), newspaper of the Spartacist Group Japan, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

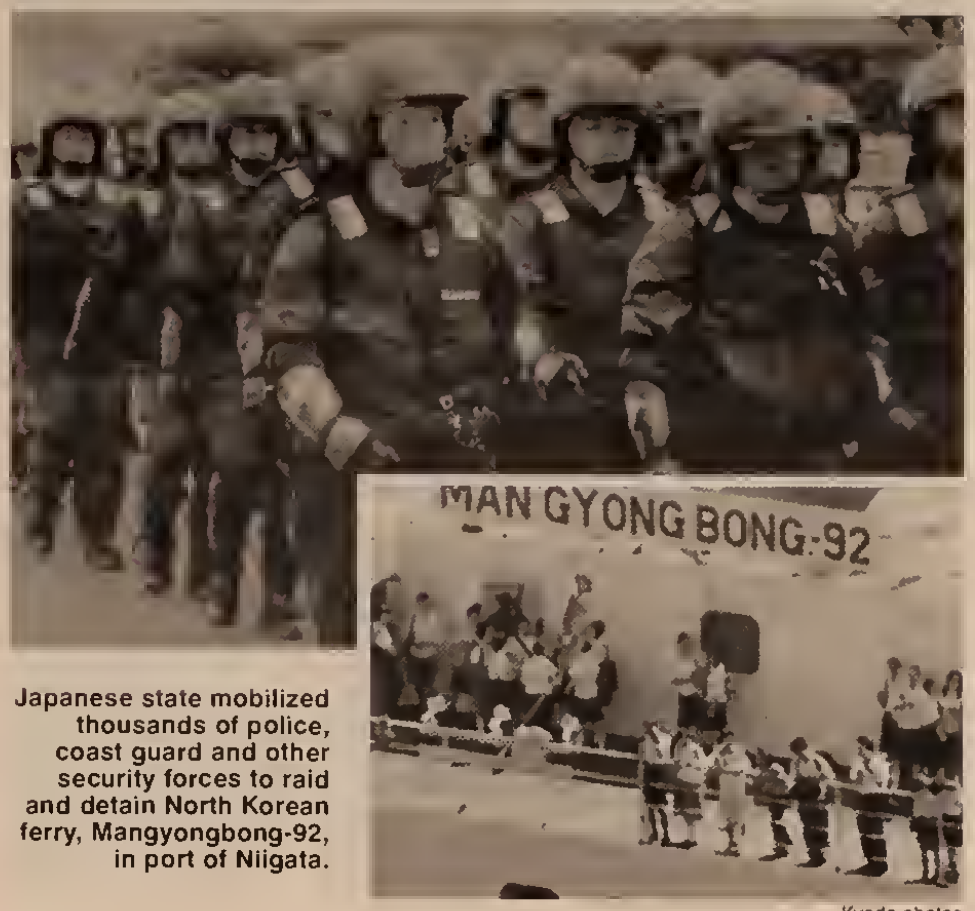
スパルタシスト

SEPTEMBER 20—For more than a year, the Japanese capitalist ruling class has been on a vicious campaign, staging provocations against the North Korean deformed workers state and laying the basis for terrorist attacks against [the pro-North Korean group] Chosen Soren. The purpose of this campaign is to prepare the population for whatever role the Japanese military will play in the imperialists' attempts to destroy North Korea and to set up Chosen Soren and anyone who stands for the defense of minorities and the working class in this country for state-sanctioned murder by the right-wing militarists.

Over the past year, North Korean ships have been interdicted and sequestered on the high seas by Japan, Australia and Spain. The Japanese coast guard played a prominent role in the September "Pacific Protector" naval exercises in the Coral Sea off the coast of Australia. These "exercises," part of the "Proliferation Security Initiative," threaten a full-scale naval blockade of North Korea, which would be an act of war. The government's continued raids on and detentions of the Mangyongbong-92 ferry, in which more than 1,900 police and coast guard personnel have taken part, are blatant attempts to isolate, intimidate and terrorize not only North Korea, but all ethnic Koreans and their defenders in this country. Japanese pirates: Hands off North Korean ships!

The hysterical accusations of "nuclear ambitions" and "spying, smuggling and illegal cash transfers" on the part of North Korea are pretexts by both Japanese and American imperialism to place a new generation of missiles in East Asia, the so-called "theater missile defense" system, directed primarily against the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states. North Korea's announcement in the fall of 2002 that it had nuclear weapons followed Tokyo governor Ishihara's demand that Japan declare war on North Korea and statements by several leading Japanese politicians that Japan could and would go nuclear. In fact, Japan's inventory of 55 tons of separated plutonium is enough to manufacture 10,000 nuclear warheads.

North Korea was created by the trouncing of the Japanese imperial army when the Soviet Red Army swept down the Korean peninsula in the closing days of World War II. This brought liberation to the Korean peninsula after 40 years of brutal Japanese colonial oppression. For more than 50 years, the Korean peninsula has been split between the bureaucratically deformed workers state in the North and the capitalist South. Since the 1950-53 Korean War, North Korea has been subjected to military encirclement and more recently an economic embargo imposed by the imperialists. The presence of almost 80,000 U.S. military troops in South Korea and Japan is a dagger aimed at the heart of the North Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese deformed workers states, and a threat to militant workers and toilers throughout Asia. The Japanese government's recent Defense White Paper targets North Korea, and the government is now threatening sanctions and pressuring UN aid agencies to stop food shipments in an attempt to starve the country into submission. Smash the counterrevolutionary alliance between Japanese and U.S. imperialism! Down with the embargo!



Japanese state mobilized thousands of police, coast guard and other security forces to raid and detain North Korean ferry, Mangyongbong-92, in port of Niigata.

Kyodo photos

Behind the campaign of Japanese and U.S. imperialism lies a broader strategy of encircling the Chinese deformed workers state, an encirclement that extends militarily from Central Asia through the Philippines and the possibility of stationing U.S. Marines in northern Australia. We stand for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state—and of China, Cuba and Vietnam where capitalism has also been eliminated—against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolution. This defense includes the right of these countries to produce and test nuclear weapons to defend themselves against the nuclear-armed imperialist madmen.

"Peace in Northeast Asia" will never be realized as long as Japanese imperialism exists. The fight to bring down Japanese imperialism through workers revolution at home is integrally linked to the defense of the remaining deformed workers states against the return of the imperialists, either through military or economic means. A counterrevolutionary overturn of collectivized property forms in North Korea would mean not only even greater poverty in that country; it would also be a dagger aimed at the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, putting the forces of capitalist restoration on the border of China's heartland of nationalized industry.

The North Korean Stalinist bureaucracy's current policy—to use the threat of nuclear arms to demand a "non-aggression pact" with U.S. imperialism—is simply militant begging, and utopian. If such a deal were ever made it would open the door to the return of United Nations "nuclear inspectors" to North Korea. Their only purpose would be to ensure that the country is incapable of defending itself against an attack—just as the UN inspectors did in Iraq. Beijing's willingness to betray its North Korean counterparts by brokering a disarmament deal between North Korea and the imperialists is a danger to the Chinese deformed workers state itself.

Our defense of the North Korean deformed workers state, ruled through primogeniture by Kim Il Sung's son Kim Jong Il, is a defense of the overturn and expropriation of capitalism. As Leon Trotsky pointed out in *The Revolution Betrayed*, the Stalinist bureaucracies are the main internal obstacle to defending the gains of the social revolutions. These gains include the right to a job, housing, education, childcare, social insurance and medical care. These gains are being undermined by the introduction of capitalist "market reforms" in China, North Korea and Vietnam, and millions of workers and peasants are being thrown out of work. The survival and extension of these gains require proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries and eventually on a worldwide scale. To abandon defense of these workers states is to abandon the historic purpose of proletarian revolution. That purpose and the defense of the workers states form the cornerstone of the program of the International Communist League, as they must for anyone who stands for world socialist revolution.

The Stalinist bureaucracies that rule these workers states oppose the perspective of international socialist revolution and seek both military and economic appeasement of the imperialists. These bureaucracies must be ousted through proletarian political revolution. What is needed is not a new form of class rule, but a change in the political character of the regime which exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat. To accomplish this, Leninist-Trotskyist parties must be built which would coordinate and lead the workers fight for political revolution in these countries and link those struggles with those of their class brothers and sisters in Japan for a socialist revolution. This would lay the basis for the development of a socialist federation of Asia.

Remilitarization and Domestic Repression

In tandem with increasing militarism, the Japanese ruling class is attacking the living standards of the working class, minorities, women and youth. The ruling class that is carrying out threats and provocations against North Korea is the same ruling class that endorsed the slaughter of Iraqis in the U.S./British war against Iraq, and is preparing its military to participate in the colonial occupation of that country. This is the same government that

continued on page 10

AP

February 2002: U.S. president Bush at "demilitarized zone" separating North and South Korea. U.S. troops in South Korea pose mortal threat to North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states.

Defend Korean Minority in Japan!

Defend North Korea's Right to Nuclear Weapons!

"The Cause That Passes Through a Prison"

18th Annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

Little captures the greed and hypocrisy of this country's capitalist rulers as poignantly as the holiday season. Amid the hype about the joy of giving and "good will towards men," American troops carry out a brutal occupation of Iraq. Legions of homeless pick through garbage cans for Christmas dinner. Thousands of workers receive pink slips while Wall Street magnates give themselves tens of millions in Christmas bonuses. Ghetto children go to bed hungry in dilapidated slums without heat. Over two million men and women, over half of them black and Hispanic, greet another new year behind prison bars. In John Ashcroft's America the only Santa Claus coming down your chimney will be an FBI agent.

For us, this time of year is an occasion to redouble our commitment to those among the inhabitants of America's prison nation who were singled out for standing up to racist capitalist oppression—trade-union militants, fighters for black freedom, fighters against national oppression and opponents of imperialism and capitalist militarism. We provide monthly stipends to 16 class-war prisoners and holiday gifts for them and their families. These gifts and messages of solidarity are a necessary reminder to these brothers and sisters that they are not forgotten.

The Partisan Defense Committee initiated this program in 1986, reviving a tradition of the early International Labor Defense (ILD) under its secretary, James P. Cannon (1925-28). As Cannon described:

> "The procession that goes in and out of the prison doors is not a new one. It is the result of an old struggle under new forms and under new conditions. All through history those who have fought against oppression have constantly been faced with the dungeons of a ruling class.... No cause is a great one which has not produced fighters in its ranks who have dared to face arrest and trial and imprisonment."
>
> —James P. Cannon, "The Cause That Passes Through a Prison," *Labor Defender* (September 1926)

This year's Holiday Appeal takes on special significance, not only because a recent Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling pushes death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal a step closer to the death chamber, or that most of the class-war prisoners we honor have spent at least a quarter century behind bars. Using the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center as a pretext the government, with the Democrats in near-unanimous agreement, rammed through the Patriot Act and other edicts which mark a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. The government's secret police have vastly expanded authority to tap your phone, search your home, scour your financial records, interrogate your librarian and place you under arrest without probable cause that a crime has been committed.

no credit

James Cannon with William "Big Bill" Haywood in Moscow, 1922. Formed in 1925, ILD launched mass campaign to save victimized anarchist militants Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, both executed in 1927.

Labor Defender

Much of what the government seeks to do is seen particularly in the case of Jose Padilla. An American citizen, Padilla was arrested in May 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare airport and held as a material witness for a month before the Bush administration declared that he had fantasies of setting off a radioactive "dirty bomb." So they declared him an "enemy combatant" and shipped him off to a military brig, where he remains today without access to an attorney, without charges being filed, without any prospect of a hearing or trial to challenge the accusations against him—the very essence of what is supposed to be due process of law.

The PDC and Spartacist League filed a friends of the court (*amici curiae*) brief in the federal court of appeals on Padilla's behalf. As the brief points out, the Bush administration is putting in place the juridical scaffolding of police-state rule—suspension of civil courts on presidential command, unlimited powers of police to arrest and detain indefinitely without cause. The government is doing no less than asserting the right to disappear people, i.e., to institutionalize in the American justice system the arbitrary deprivation of rights that is the hallmark of right-wing dictatorships propped up around the world by U.S. imperialism. To take a stand for today's class-war prisoners is to stand up to Washington's police-state designs and to strike a blow for tomorrow's fighters against the ravages of capitalist oppression.

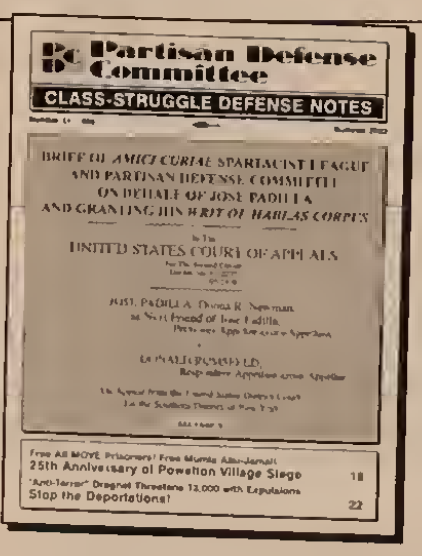
While initially largely directed at immigrants from predominantly Islamic countries, the new repressive measures are ultimately to be used against the labor movement, blacks and opponents of U.S. imperialism. When New York transit workers voted to go on strike last year, the media screamed they were launching a "jihad" and the strikebreaking Taylor Law was invoked. On April 7, based on so-called intelligence information, riot-equipped cops at the Oakland docks fired on longshoremen and antiwar protesters, including supporters of the Spartacist League, with wooden bullets and concussion grenades. Had the Patriot Act been in force at the time, class-war prisoner Jerry Dale Lowe, the West Virginia miner sentenced to eleven years for defending his union during a 1993 strike, could have been declared a "terrorist" and whisked off to a prison indefinitely without even the semblance of a trial.

For Class-Struggle Non-Sectarian Defense!

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League. We stand unconditionally on the side of working people and their allies in struggle against their exploiters and oppressors. We defend, in Cannon's words, "any member of the workers movement, regardless of his views, who suffered persecution by the capitalist courts because of his activities or his opinion" (*First Ten Years of American Communism* [1962]).

Initiated in 1974, the PDC cut its teeth on organizing successful international defense campaigns for Latin American leftists in the grip of bloody military dictatorships. We launched fund-raising campaigns for striking British miners in the mid 1980s as well as for the people of the Afghan city of Jalalabad when it was besieged by CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. We have initiated mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the KKK from marching in cities across the country, including the 10,000-strong mobilization in New York City four years ago. In Oakland, in February 2002 the PDC and Labor Black League for Social Defense initiated a united-front demonstration of 300, centered on the powerful longshore union, in defense of immigrants and in opposition to the Patriot and Maritime Security acts.

These actions draw on the internationalist defense traditions bequeathed from the early years of the Communist International. These were embodied in a defense organization formed in the Soviet Union in 1922 called the International Organization for Aid to Fighters of the Revolution (MOPR)—more popularly known as the International Red Aid—and its American affiliate, the ILD. The MOPR was formed primarily to organize worldwide worker relief efforts for victims of counterrevolutionary White terror unleashed after the Red Army's withdrawal from Poland. Its first campaign assisted the Bulgarian victims of White terror after the failed



Class-Struggle Defense Notes
No. 31, Summer 2003
50¢ (24 pages)
Order from/make checks payable to:
Partisan Defense Committee
P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10013-0099

WV Photo

New York City: Partisan Defense Committee rally on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal, June 1990.

An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!

The 16 class-war prisoners described below receive monthly stipends from the PDC.

Mumia Abu-Jamal: Former Black Panther Party spokesman, well-known supporter of the MOVE organization and award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless," Jamal was framed up for the 1981 killing of police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. December 9 marks 22 years on death row for a killing the cops know he did not commit. Over two years ago, Jamal's attorneys submitted to the courts the sworn confession of professional hitman Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed officer Faulkner. But to the racists in black robes of both the Pennsylvania and federal judiciaries, a court of law is no place for evidence of the innocence of a fighter for the oppressed like Jamal.

Jamal's case is a textbook example of a racist frame-up. He was saddled with a lawyer he didn't want—and who didn't want Jamal's case—a judge, Albert Sabo, known as the "king of death row," an overwhelmingly white jury, a prosecutor's office that concealed and fabricated evidence and a parade of witnesses who were coerced by the notorious Philadelphia police into giving lying testimony against Mumia. In December 2001, a federal court in Pennsylvania overturned the death sentence while at the same time affirming the frame-up conviction. Both the prosecution (seeking to reinstate the sentence of death) and Mumia (seeking to overturn the conviction) appealed. Those appeals were placed on hold pending a ruling on Jamal's appeal before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which finally ruled last month to again bar Beverly's testimony and uphold Jamal's conviction. Still on death row, Mumia remains just a short walk and maybe a few months from the death chamber. Workers, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression must now redouble their efforts. *Free Mumia Now!*

Jerry Dale Lowe: A West Virginia United Mine Workers union militant and chairman of the local UMWA safety committee, Lowe was framed up for the shooting death of a scab contractor at Arch Mineral's Ruffner mine during a seven-month strike in 1993 and sentenced the following year to eleven years with no possibility of parole.

The bullet which killed the scab had come from an area where armed company thugs from Elite Security had been positioned. When it became clear that prosecutors had no evidence to convict

WV Photos

Above: Victimized mine worker Jerry Dale Lowe. Right: Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Lowe under state law, the Clinton Justice Department stepped in to railroad Lowe to prison on charges of "interfering with interstate commerce."

We have urged the UMWA and other militants everywhere to take up Lowe's cause. The leadership of the UMWA, along with the rest of the union bureaucracy, abandoned Lowe to face the wrath of the labor-hating government alone. And though his sentence is winding up, the fight for his freedom is as pressing as ever.

Eight MOVE members, **Chuck Africa, Michael Davis Africa, Debbie Sims Africa, Janet Holloway Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Orr Africa, Edward Goodman Africa** and **William Phillips Africa,** are in their 26th year in prison. They were sentenced to 30-100 years after the 8 August 1978 siege on their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, having been falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops' own crossfire. Convicted of the same charges, Merle Africa died in prison in 1998.

Jaan Laaman and **Ray Luc Levasseur** have spent almost two decades behind bars. These leftist activists were part of the Ohio 7, who were convicted for their role in a radical group that took credit for bank "expropriations" and bombings in the late 1970s and '80s against symbols of U.S. imperialism such as military and corporate offices. Before their arrests in Ohio and Virginia in 1984 and 1985, they were targets of massive manhunts throughout the East Coast and Midwest. Their children were kidnapped at gunpoint by the Feds and interrogated. The government piled one sentence atop another, intent on keeping the Ohio 7 imprisoned until the day they die.

Already imprisoned on multiple charges, in 1989 Levasseur, his wife, Pat, and Richard Williams were charged under sedition laws dusted off by the Feds and tried again for the same alleged crimes for which they had been jailed. After the longest "seditious conspiracy" trial in American history, all three were acquitted, an important setback to the government's attempt to make all leftist political opponents into outlaws.

The politics of the Ohio 7 were once held by thousands of radicals during the heyday of the Vietnam antiwar movement and the New Left, who wrote off the possibility of winning the working class to a revolutionary program and saw themselves as an auxiliary to "Third World" liberation movements. But, like the Weathermen before them, the Ohio 7 were spurned by the "respectable" left. From the standpoint of the proletariat, the actions of Levasseur and his comrades against imperialism and racist injustice are not a crime. As the PDC has said from the time the Ohio 7 were first persecuted by the capitalist state, these courageous fighters should not have served a day in prison and should be free now.

Hugo Pinell is the last of the San Quentin Six still in prison; a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson, who was murdered by prison guards in 1971. In prison for over 38 years, last year Pinell was again denied parole and continues to serve a life sentence at the notorious Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit in California. Pinell, who has been denied parole seven times, has a parole hearing scheduled for January.

Ed Poindexter and **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism. They were victims of a racist FBI COINTELPRO operation, framed up for an explosion in 1970 which killed a cop. Both were convicted on the basis of perjured testimony, sentenced to life and have now spent more than 30 years apiece in jail. The Nebraska Board of Pardons refuses to lessen their sentences so that they can be considered for parole.

Jamal Hart, Mumia's son, was sentenced in 1998 to 15½ years on bogus firearms possession charges, targeted for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. Although initially charged under Pennsylvania laws, which would have meant a probationary sentence, Clinton's Justice Department intervened to have Hart thrown in prison. He is not eligible for parole. Hart is at Fairton, New Jersey where he is subject to abuse by brutal and racist prison guards. In July, Hart was thrown into solitary.

Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeal will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252. ■

1923 insurrection. The ILD together with MOPR rallied millions from Shanghai to San Francisco—for anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti framed up on murder charges and ultimately executed in 1927; for revolutionaries subjected to counter-revolutionary terror in East Europe; for besieged Nicaragua when the U.S. Marines went in in the late 1920s.

The ILD was born out of discussions that took place in Moscow in 1925 between Cannon and the great labor leader Big Bill Haywood. It was founded especially to take up the plight of class-war prisoners in the United States. It fused the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) tradition of militant class-struggle non-sectarian defense and their slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all," with the great internationalism of the Bolshevik Revolution, a revolution made not merely for the workers of Russia but for the workers and oppressed of the world. As a resolution from the ILD's first conference in 1925 declared:

> "The labor movement must be awakened from its slumber and must be roused to the menacing significance of the attempt of the capitalists to break the morale of the working-class by imprisoning its best fighters. The workers must not be allowed to forget those who lie in prison for them, but must be stirred into action in their defense."

The U.S.' emergence as an imperialist power at the close of the 19th century was accompanied by brutal racist terror—the 1890s saw an average of two lynchings a week. It was also a period of intense labor struggle, with militant strikes more numerous than any time since. The IWW led union organizing drives and anti-lynching campaigns; their fight against the arrests of thousands of members for soapboxing and distributing IWW leaflets, known as the free speech campaign, laid the basis for what rights under the First Amendment are in existence today.

The rise of labor struggle was met with brutal state repression. There is the case of the Haymarket martyrs, mostly immigrant working-class leaders, largely anarchists, who without a shred of evidence were framed up for a bombing during a workers rally in Chicago on 4 May 1886. A 1902 anti-anarchist law in New York became the model for state and federal "criminal syndicalism" laws which targeted organizations and individuals seeking "a change in industrial ownership or control, or effecting any political change." In 1903 Congress passed the first legislation barring immigrants who "believe in or advocate the overthrow by force and violence" of the U.S. government, the first such law criminalizing political beliefs since the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798.

With the beginning of World War I and preparation for U.S. involvement, the government stepped up its attacks on labor and the left. Well-known California labor leaders Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, opponents of U.S. entry into World War I, were framed up for a bombing at a Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco in 1916, and spent 22 years in prison. Under the 1917 Espionage Act and 1918 Sedition Act thousands of labor agitators, opponents of U.S. entry into the war, anarchists and "reds" were imprisoned. Among them was Ricardo Flores Magón, a leading Mexican anarchist who was imprisoned in 1918 and who died of diabetes in Leavenworth prison in 1922. Another was Socialist Party leader Eugene V. Debs, for a speech containing the "incendiary" message to workers: "You need to know that you are fit for something better than slavery and cannon fodder." Haywood himself fled to Moscow while his appeal was pending from his conviction under those same laws for calling for a strike during wartime.

The ILD was launched in the midst of a decade of rampant reaction. In the

continued on page 9

Benefit for Class-War Prisoners

Organize for Jamal's Freedom

Bay Area	New York City	Chicago
Sunday, December 7 **1 to 4 p.m.**	**Saturday, December 13** **5 to 10 p.m.**	**Sunday, December 14** **3 to 7 p.m.**
Centro del Pueblo 474 Valencia, San Francisco	6 Harrison St., Manhattan (Take 1 or 9 to Franklin St.)	United Electricat Hall 37 S. Ashland (at Monroe)
For more information: (510) 839-0852 P.O. Box 77462 San Francisco, CA 94107	For more information: (212) 406-4252 P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Sta. New York, NY 10013	For more information: (312) 563-0442 P.O. Box 802867 Chicago, IL 60680

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Hong Kong

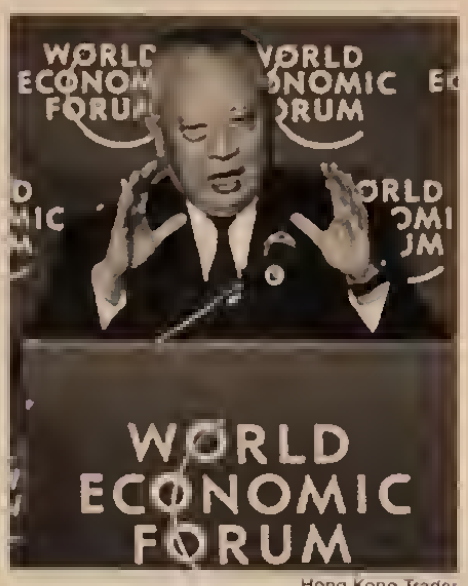
Expropriate the Bourgeoisie!

This summer, Hong Kong was the site of a series of mass, anti-Communist mobilizations openly, indeed flagrantly, backed by American and British imperialism. The pretext for the protests was new "security" legislation introduced (and since withdrawn) by the Beijing-appointed and directed executive of this capitalist enclave within the People's Republic of China (PRC). These events clearly illuminate certain basic truths that have been obscured by the widespread notion that China has become or is fast becoming capitalist under the government of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Despite more than two decades of market-oriented "reforms" by the Beijing Stalinist regime, the core elements of China's economy remain collectivized. The 1949 Revolution, although bureaucratically deformed from the outset, liberated mainland China from the capitalists and landlords and their American imperialist masters. And they want to get China back. The conciliatory policies of the CCP regime, from Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping to Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, have allowed Hong Kong to become a bridgehead for the forces of capitalist counterrevolution within the PRC. A proletarian political revolution in China ousting the Stalinist bureaucracy would necessarily expropriate the Chinese capitalist class in Hong Kong, the imperialist-backed enemy within of China's workers and rural toilers.

When Mao's peasant-based Red Army marched into Beijing in 1949, a large body of China's capitalists fled to the offshore island of Taiwan where they have been protected ever since by American military power. A lesser though still significant number of China's capitalists decamped to the British island colony of Hong Kong. The Mao regime, for all its strident Chinese nationalist rhetoric and pretensions to revolutionary socialism, never challenged British sovereignty over Hong Kong.

After years-long negotiations, Hong Kong was transferred to the sovereignty of the People's Republic in 1997. Under



Hong Kong Trader

Beijing-appointed Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee-hwa.

the formula "one country, two systems," the Jiang Zemin regime ensured there would be no infringement of the property rights of Hong Kong's wealthy financiers and other businessmen. We wrote at the time:

> "The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) joined in cheering as the rotted British Empire finally lost its last major colonial holding with the lowering of the bloody Union Jack and the raising of the five-starred red flag of the People's Republic. But we warn that in the hands of the venal Stalinist bureaucracy, which has pledged to maintain Hong Kong's capitalist system, the takeover of the territory is a dagger aimed at the remaining gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution."
>
> —*WV* No. 671, 11 July 1997

Throughout their occupation of Hong Kong, the British imperialists lorded it over the island as the racist and repressive overseers. It was only in the years leading up to reunification that the British imperialists started to install some trappings of "democracy" in Hong Kong. The last British colonial governor, Christopher Patten, actively promoted the formation of a militantly anti-Communist, pro-Western party, the Democratic Party. Supported by a section of the Hong Kong bourgeoisie, the Democratic Party acquired a mass constituency among the city's large petty-bourgeois population—e.g., the managerial and technical personnel of its banks, trading houses, industrial corporations, etc.

Hong Kong, July 1: Anti-Communist protest by 500,000 against proposed "security" law. Right: Demonstrators burn communist flag.

Reuters photos

The political liberalization of the early 1990s also allowed the formation of a left-wing, pro-Beijing party, the Democratic Association for the Betterment of Hong Kong (DAB). Its founding leader was a self-described Marxist. Many of its leading figures were former Maoist "Red Guards" who had made much trouble for the British colonial authorities in the late 1960s. More importantly, from its inception the DAB has been largely based on a section of the working class through its close ties to the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions (FTU), which with a combined membership of almost 300,000 in 2000 is the city's largest. Many DAB leaders are former union officials.

As the transfer of sovereignty to the PRC approached, the main body of the Hong Kong bourgeoisie decided it was tactically smarter to collaborate with the Beijing regime than to adopt a confrontational stance à la the Democratic Party. These "patriotic" financiers and industrialists did not join the leftist DAB but instead formed their own parties, most prominently the Liberal Party, with an explicitly "free market" capitalist ideology and program. Following the July 1 anti-Communist mobilization, which drew some 500,000, it was Liberal Party leader James Tien who reportedly convinced Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee-hwa—and behind him the powers that be in Beijing—to drop the new "security" legislation.

The preservation of Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave within the PRC is in keeping with the more than two-decade-long policy of the Beijing regime of encouraging investment in the mainland by the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie. But the British, strongly backed by the Americans, also demanded that there should be no curbs on the activities of the political parties of the Hong Kong propertied classes, including especially the Democratic Party. This was not at all to the liking of Jiang Zemin and his cohorts.

As it was, a compromise was reached. Beijing appointed a "strong" executive in Hong Kong headed by a former shipping magnate, Tung Chee-hwa. The city's legislative body was given quite limited powers, and elections to it were structured in such a way that the Democratic Party could not gain control even if it garnered a majority of the votes.

Since 1997, Hong Kong has experienced a certain shift in its social composition which also affects the local political balance of forces. Hong Kong's capitalists have increasingly concentrated industrial investment on the mainland where labor is much cheaper. One consequence has been an increase in the relative social weight of the petty bourgeoisie, which benefits the Democratic and Liberal parties as against the mainly working-class-based DAB.

The Crisis over Article 23

The crisis last summer was set off when the Tung executive, certainly acting under the directions of Beijing, proposed new "security" legislation in the form of implementing Article 23 of Hong Kong's separate constitution (the Basic Law). This would have broadened the powers of the Hong Kong executive to suppress "seditious" groups and individuals. Had the new "security" law been enacted, it would more likely have been used against militant workers and leftists, including dissident elements of the DAB/FTU, rather than against anti-Communist rightists. As revolutionary Trotskyists, we opposed this legislation, and we place no confidence in the bureaucracy to carry out genuine defense of the Chinese deformed workers state. Concretely, the Beijing bureaucracy has no intention of cleaning out the bourgeois counterrevolutionaries in Hong Kong because it is intent on maintaining Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave.

The July 1 protest had nothing to do with maintaining the legal status quo in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The Democratic Party has made no secret that its goal is to take political power in Hong Kong and transform it into an anti-Communist bastion from which to launch a "pro-democracy" movement on the mainland. On the eve of the protest, British foreign office minister Bill Rammell issued a statement denouncing the proposed "security" legislation as a violation of Hong Kong's "independent" legal system. Afterward, writing in no less an authoritative organ of American capital than the *Wall Street Journal* (10 July), James A. Kelly, Bush's assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, lauded the Hong Kong protesters for sending a "powerful message that freedom matters deeply to them." Needless to say, the only "freedom" that matters to the men represented by the *Wall Street Journal* is freedom to exploit the workers and rural toilers of China as well as those in the rest of the world.

Initially, the DAB/FTU leadership supported the proposed legislation out of loyalty to Beijing. In fact, the DAB and FTU staged counterdemonstrations, reportedly drawing 40,000, against the anti-Communists in July under the slogans "National security is the responsibility of everyone" and "Without the state, we don't have a home." In late August, however, the DAB leaders did an about-face and proposed that any new "security" legislation be postponed for at least a year. In contrast to the DAB/FTU leaders, a Trotskyist organization in Hong Kong would have opposed Article 23, seeking rather to expand the available democratic rights in order to mobilize the working class, especially supporters of the DAB/FTU, against the city's capitalist class in both its openly anti-Communist and "patriotic" wings.

The two organizations in Hong Kong *mis*identified with Trotskyism—the *October Review* and Pioneer groups—are in substance anti-Communist social democrats. The former actively mobilized for the July protest, calling for a "return of government to the people" (*October Review*, 31 May). The Pioneer group actually joined with the right-wing bourgeois nationalists of the Guomindang to protest *against* restoring Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China in 1997. This summer Pioneer was part of the "Civil Human Rights Front" that organized the July 1 anti-Communist demonstration, which Pioneer hailed as an "initial victory of people's power."

Although not now possible, the American imperialists would like to use Hong Kong as a staging point to replay in mainland China the same political strategy they used in East Europe and the former Soviet Union in the 1980s and early '90s: promoting a capitalist counterrevolutionary movement in the name of Western-style "democracy." Behind the facade of parliamentary democracy in the West and elsewhere is the reality of the political as well as economic dominance of the capitalist class—i.e., racial oppression, persecution of immigrants, brutal exploitation, etc.

As part of our struggle to defend and extend the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, we call for the expropriation of the Hong Kong bourgeoisie, including their holdings on the Chinese mainland. But to carry out this task poses the need to sweep away the Beijing bureaucracy, which by its policies is undermining the defense of the Chinese workers state, through workers political revolution. We fight for a government of workers and peasants councils (soviets) such as was created by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky. Such a government in China would seize the wealth of Hong Kong's financiers and other capitalists and use these resources in the interests of China's workers and rural toilers.■

China...

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have been for some time. The overwhelming majority of these were longtime CCP managerial cadre who took over the small state-owned enterprises they were running when these were privatized over the past several years.

Some groups that falsely claim to he Trotskyist have embraced the now-conventional wisdom in Western bourgeois circles that "capitalist roadism" has decisively triumphed among those governing China. Commenting on the 16th CCP Congress, the British-centered tendency led by Peter Taaffe wrote: "China is on the road to complete capitalist restoration, but the ruling clique are attempting to do this gradually and by maintaining their repressive authoritarian grip" (*Socialist*, 22 November 2002). By labeling China's government an "authoritarian" capitalist-restorationist regime, the Taaffeites and their ilk can justify supporting imperialist-backed anti-Communist forces in China in the name of promoting "democracy," just as they supported Boris Yeltsin's "democratic" counterrevolution in the USSR in 1991.

In maintaining that China continues to be a hureaucratically deformed expression of proletarian state power, we do not

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Chinese astronaut Yang Liwei. This October, China became the third country in the world to launch a man into space.

deny or minimize the growing social weight in China of both the newly fledged capitalist entrepreneurs on the mainland and the old, established offshore Chinese hourgeoisie in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Many a top government and/or party official has a son, younger brother, nephew—or, as in the case of Chinese president Hu Jintao, son-in-law—who's a private businessman.

Nonetheless, the political power of the main body of the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy continues to he based on the core collectivized elements of China's economy. Furthermore, the economic policies of the CCP regime are still constrained by fear of social—especially working-class—unrest which could topple it. This came close to happening in 1989 when student-centered protests for political liberalization and against corruption triggered a spontaneous workers revolt that was then suppressed with great bloodshed by regime-loyal army units. (For an extensive account of this incipient proletarian political revolution, see "Ten Years After Tiananmen—China: Fight Capitalist Restoration! For Workers Political Revolution!" *WV* Nos. 714 and 715, 28 May and 11 June 1999.)

A capitalist counterrevolution in China (as in East Europe and the former USSR) would he accompanied by the collapse of Stalinist bonapartism and the political fracturing of the ruling Communist Party. The economic policies of the Beijing Stalinist regime that encourage capitalist enterprise (and the corresponding rightward shifts in the hureaucracy's formal ideological posture) have increasingly strengthened those social forces that will give rise to imperialist-backed, openly counterrevolutionary factions and parties when the CCP can no longer maintain its present monopoly of political power. This can he clearly seen today in the capitalist enclave of Hong Kong, the one part of the PRC where hourgeois oppositional parties exist. Last summer, Hong Kong's Democratic Party organized mass, anti-Communist mobilizations openly supported by the Bush administration in Washington and its junior partners in London (see "Hong Kong: Expropriate the Bourgeoisie!", page 6).

Sujian Guo, a right-wing Chinese émigré intellectual in the U.S., published an interesting article in the *Journal of Contemporary China* (August 2003) dissenting from the view that China has already become or is fast becoming capitalist ("The Ownership Reform in China: What Direction and How Far?"). According to a hrief biographical sketch, Guo was a "former policy analyst at the Party Central Committee in China." Given his present ideological hias, Guo minimizes the growth of capitalist elements in China's economy and ascribes to the top CCP leaders a continuing helief in socialism, at any rate in the historical long run. But this anti-Communist advocate of "free market" capitalism understands a hasic truth which most leftists, including self-described Marxists, do not:

> "How to privatize such a huge estate of state ownership *within the framework of the existing political system and structure* is really problematic and technically unworkable. The experience of other former communist countries has shown that there is no single case of making privatization successful with the communist party remaining in power and its political system intact." [emphasis in original]

The leaders of the CCP, too, looked at what had happened in the East European "People's Democracies" and the former USSR in the late 1980s and early 1990s, drew their own lessons and acted accordingly. They also drew some lessons from the 1989 Tiananmen revolt that threatened their own downfall. They were determined there would be no political liberalization even at the academic/intellectual level. The regime of Jiang Zemin, who succeeded Deng when the latter died in 1997, was able to prevent any organized factional opposition in what historically has been a quite fractious ruling Stalinist party. There appears to be no significant dissident movement or milieu on the mainland either to the right or left of the central CCP leadership.

The Latest Illusion of Chinese Stalinism

China's high rate of economic growth in recent years—moreover, amid a generalized world capitalist recession—has produced a certain triumphalist mood among the CCP leadership and cadre and affiliated intelligentsia. One would certainly encounter a very different mood among the millions of workers laid off from state-owned enterprises, impoverished migrants from the countryside and poor peasants barely eking out a living toiling on tiny plots with rudimentary equipment. But among Chinese intellectuals of mainstream political views one increasingly hears the notion that their country has somehow found a middle way between the anarchy of "free market" capitalism and the rigidities of the old-style Stalinist "command economy."

In their younger days, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao et al. doubtless subscribed to the Maoist-Stalinist doctrine that China was "building socialism" with its own unaided efforts. They now view that as a product of "dogmatic thinking" and see themselves as hardheaded realists confronting and dealing with the rest of the world as it actually is. Yet Jiang, Hu and their cohorts are driven hy delusions of grandeur exceeding the wildest imaginings of Chairman Mao.

The present CCP leaders believe that they can modernize China, transforming it into a great world power—indeed, the

Magnum

Mao's anti-Soviet alliance with U.S. imperialism, sealed by 1972 meeting in Beijing with war criminal Nixon, helped open door to imperialist penetration of China.

global superpower of the 21st century—through ever greater integration into the world capitalist economy. They truly believe they can control and manipulate Citibank, the Deutsche Bank and the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi to help huild up China so that in a generation or two it will surpass the United States, Germany and Japan. Believing they are transforming China into a global superpower, they are actually clearing the path for returning China to the pre-revolutionary era of untrammeled imperialist subjugation.

The growth of imperialist belligerence toward China since the collapse of the Soviet Union is evidence enough that the world's bourgeoisies will not countenance the Beijing hureaucracy's great power ambitions. Over the past decade, the Pentagon has redeployed a significant proportion of its military forces to the Pacific Rim region, while pushing ahead with plans for a "theater missile defense." As a result of its incursion into Afghanistan and Central Asia, as well as a renewed military presence in the Philippines and elsewhere, the U.S. has significantly strengthened its military vise around China. In signing on to the U.S.-led "war on terror," Beijing has only encouraged U.S. imperialism in its counterrevolutionary drive. The Chinese leadership has also joined the crusade against North Korea's nuclear weapons program. This is a nationalist betrayal that undermines the Chinese deformed workers state itself; capitalist counterrevolution in North Korea would only embolden the forces of capitalist restoration targeting China.

To be sure, the ruling Chinese Stalinists are not simply supine in the face of U.S. military encirclement: witness their vigorous response to Washington's spy plane provocation two years ago. The CCP regime has also resisted American demands to impose an economic embargo against the North Korean deformed workers state. But the Stalinists' pipe dream that there can he "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism can only lull the vigilance of the Chinese masses and undermine the defense of their workers state.

The alternative to a bloody, imperialist-backed counterrevolution is proletarian political revolution. For the past several years, there have been large-scale and widespread popular protests and labor struggles, especially over the massive layoffs in state-owned industrial enterprises. To date, through a combination of repression and concessions, the regime has managed to contain these at the level of localized economic actions. Nonetheless, at its hase China is a ***profoundly unstable society***. Sooner or later, the explosive social tensions will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. And when that happens, the fate of the most populous country on earth will be starkly posed: proletarian political revolution to open the road to socialism or capitalist enslavement and imperialist suhjugation.

The outcome of that momentous battle will be of decisive significance for the working masses not only of China hut of the entire world. As with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the restoration of capitalism in China would further embolden the imperialists to lash out against their own workers and against the semicolonial peoples everywhere. It would also heighten rivalries hetween the imperialists over who would exploit China, bringing the planet that much closer to a new interimperialist world war. This underscores the obligation of the international proletariat to stand in defense of the gains of the Chinese Revolution. On the other hand, a political revolution carried out under the banner of proletarian internationalism would truly shake the world.

A government of workers and peasants councils would expropriate without compensation the hundreds of hillions of dollars in productive wealth owned by Chinese capitalists—mainland and offshore—and by Western and Japanese investors. It would re-establish a centrally planned and managed economy—including a state monopoly of foreign trade—governed not according to the arbitrary "commandism" of a closed-in bureaucratic caste (which produced such disasters as Mao's "Great Leap Forward") hut by the widest proletarian democracy.

Such measures would provoke intense imperialist hostility, both militarily and economically (e.g., an economic embargo). But among the workers and oppressed internationally, including in the imperialist heartlands, they would meet with huge sympathy and solidarity.

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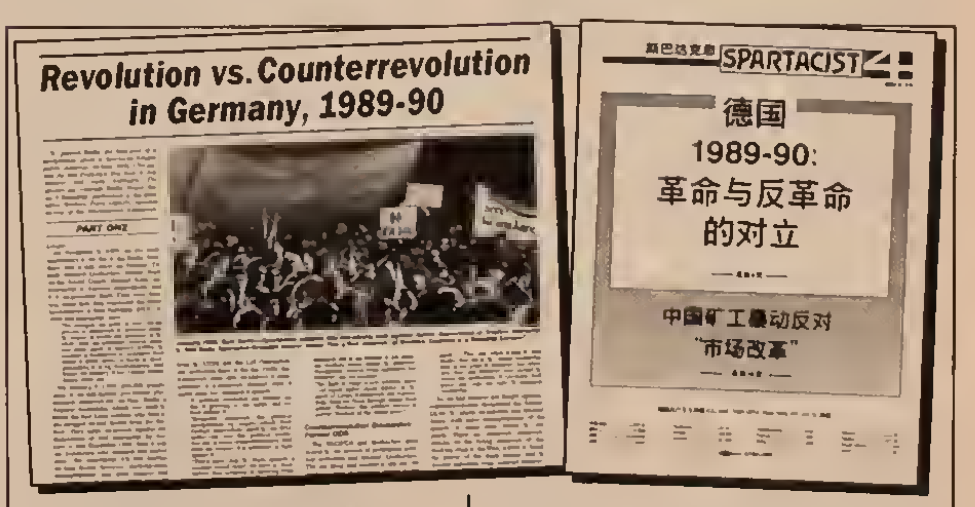

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Imhued with Stalinist preachings of "socialism in one country," even the most leftist Chinese workers may view the prospect for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries as remote or utopian. But a proletarian political revolution in China would shatter the "death of communism" ideological climate propagated by the bourgeoisie since the destruction of the Soviet Union. It would radicalize the proletariat of Japan, the industrial powerhouse of East Asia. It would spark a fight for the revolutionary reunification of Korea—through political revolution in the beleaguered North and socialist revolution in the South—and reverberate among the masses of South Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines bled white hy imperialist austerity. It would revive the working people of Russia who have heen ground down by a decade of capitalist immiseration.

Only through the overthrow of capitalist class rule internationally, particularly in the imperialist centers of North America, West Europe and Japan, can the all-round modernization of China be achieved as part of a socialist Asia. It is to provide the neeessary leadership for the proletariat in these struggles that the ICL seeks to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International—world party of socialist revolution.

The Core Collectivist Elements of China's Economy

The CCP leadership officially deseribes China as a "socialist market economy." It is the "socialist" (i.e., collectivist) aspeets which are responsihle for the *positive* economic developments in China in recent years: the vast expansion of investment in infrastructure (e.g., urhan construction, canals, railroads and the giant Three Gorges Dam project), the ahility of China to have navigated snecessfully through the 1997-98 East Asian financial/economic crisis and then a generalized world capitalist recession. And it is the market aspects of China's economy which are responsihle for the *negative* developments—the ever-widening gap between rich and poor, the immiseration of a large and growing fraction of the populace, tens of millions of workers laid off from state-owned enterprises, the army of impoverished migrants in the cities who can no longer make a living in the countryside.

In China today, it is the core collectivized elements of the economy which continue to be dominant, though not in a stable, coherent manner due to an ever-shifting interaction between contradictory institutional arrangements and government policies. In 2001, state-owned and partly state-owned enterprises (shareholding corporations) accounted for 57 percent of the gross value of China's industrial output (*China Statistical Yearbook* [2002]). But this simple statistical figure obscures the ***strategic centrality*** of state-owned industry. The private (including foreign-owned) sector consists for the most part of factories producing light manufactures hy lahor-intensive methods. Heavy industry, the high-tech sectors, modern armaments production are overwhelmingly concentrated in state-owned enterprises. It is these enterprises that have enabled China to put a man in space. Far more importantly, it is state-owned industry that has enahled China to huild an arsenal of nuelear weapons and long-range missiles to ward off the American imperialists' threat of a nuclear first strike.

All major hanks in China are state-owned. Almost the entirety of household savings—estimated at ***one trillion dollars***—is deposited in the four main state-owned commercial hanks. Government control of the financial system has been key to maintaining and expanding production in state-owned industry and to the overall expansion of the state sector.

Between 1998 and 2001, government spending in China increased from ***12 to 20 percent*** of the country's gross domestic product. The largest and fastest-growing component of government expenditure has been investment in infrastructure, which increased hy ***81 percent*** over these three years. Moreover, this has been happening at a time when the entire capitalist world—including the wealthiest countries in North America and West Europe—has been pursuing ***fiscal austerity***. Total planned expenditure to construct a network of canals for irrigation purposes from the Yangtze River to the Yellow River in the north is $59 billion. Another $42 hillion is to be spent on expanding the lines of China's state-owned railroad system. By comparison, last year direct foreign investment in China from all sources totaled $53 hillion.

Continued state ownership of the financial system has enahled the Beijing regime up to now to effeetively (though not totally) control the flow of moneycapital in and out of mainland China. China's currency, the yuan (also called the renminhi) is not freely convertible; it is not traded (legally) in international currency markets. The restricted convertibility of the yuan has kept China insulated from the volatile movements of short-term capital ("hot money") which periodieally wreak havoc on the economies of Third World neocolonial countries from Latin America to East Asia.

Furthermore, over the past year the Beijing regime has maintained an increasing undervaluation of the yuan (in "free market" terms), much to the displeasure of American, European and Japanese capitalists. A second-level capitalist-imperialist country like Britain could not have controlled the exchange rate of its currency in world markets as China has done. Within months if not weeks, speculative money-capital would have flooded into the City of London, forcing an upward revaluation of the pound regardless of what the Blair government wanted or did.

It is precisely the core collectivist elements of China's economy described above which the forces of world imperialism want to eliminate and dismantle. Their ultimate goal is to reduce China to a giant sweatshop under neocolonial subjugation. Jonathan Anderson, the China "expert" for the Wall Street investment bank Goldman Sachs, asserts: "The hottom line is that China is becoming a manufacturing huh for the rest of the world in low-end, lahour-intensive goods. Contrary to current fears, the rest of the world is hecoming a manufacturing huh for China in high-end, capital-intensive goods" (London *Financial Times*, 25 February). The man from Goldman Sachs is here projecting onto China's present economic reality Wall Street's plans for that country's future.

The Beijing bureaucracy's abandonment of the strict state monopoly of foreign trade serves, however, to facilitate Wall Street's plans. Despite its rapid growth in recent years, the Chinese economy is backward relative to even the lesser capitalist-imperalist powers. There is a dramatic amount of new construction currently underway in Beijing, with cranes visihle virtually everywhere. But as a comrade who recently visited China told *Workers Vanguard*: "The construction crews are always very large, with not much in the way of earth-moving equipment other than wheelharrows and picks. Once at the edge of Beijing, I saw ahout 30 guys working to put up a three-foot hrick wall with two horse-drawn carts full of hricks."

While China's exports to the U.S. and other Western countries continue to increase at record levels, these largely consist of low-wage, low-valne light manufacture and consumer goods like clothing, toys and household appliances. As Jonathan Anderson points out, China's increase in gross industrial output hetween 1993 and 2002—from $480 hillion to $1,300 hillion—was nearly completely offset by the increase in its gross purchases of industrial products, i.e., machinery and capital equipment.

Against the economies of the U.S., Japan and West Europe, Chinese industry, with its relatively low productivity of lahor, cannot compete on the world market. What Trotsky wrote in refuting the Stalinist doctrine of "socialism in one country" in the Soviet Union applies with full force to China today:

> "The capitalist world shows us by its export and import figures that it has other instruments of persuasion than those of military intervention. To the extent that productivity of labor and the productivity of a social system as a whole are measured on the market by the correlation of prices, it is not so much military intervention as the intervention of cheaper capitalist commodities that constitutes perhaps the greatest immediate menace to Soviet economy."
>
> —*The Third International After Lenin* (1928)

The main weapon availahle to a nationally isolated and relatively economically backward workers state against the intervention of cheaper goods is the state monopoly of foreign trade—i.e., the strict control of imports and exports by the government (for a fuller treatment of this question, see "Workers Protests Shake China," Part Two, *WV* No. 782, 31 May 2002). But the ultimate answer to China's economic hackwardness and the only road to a socialist—i.e., classless, egalitarian—society lies in world socialist revolution and China's integration into an ***internationally planned economy***.

Apo Leong

Chinese women workers toil in shoe factory in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone.

Imperialists' Economic Strategy for Capitalist Restoration

Let us look at the program of further economic "reforms" in China put forward by the representatives and spokesmen for world, centrally American, imperialism. That program was summed up in a report on China a few years ago hy the Washington-based World Bank: "The most important recommendation is a change in the role of government from controller and producer to architect of a more self-regulating and self-adjusting type of system."

First and foremost is the "recommendation" that the state-owned banks cut off credit to loss-making state-owned enterprises and impose higher interest rates and stiffer repayment terms on profit-making enterprises. Such a "tight money" policy on the part of China's banks would throw millions more workers onto the streets. And it would permanently dismantle a large part of China's modern, capital-intensive producer goods industry (e.g., machine tools, heavy electrical equipment, agricultural machinery, construction equipment).

At a more fundamental level, Western and Japanese capitalists want to replace China's state-owned hanks with their own. Opening up China's financial system to foreign hanks would lead to a massive outflow of funds since China's hanks cannot offer the higher rates of return availahle in international money markets. A large fraction of the economic surplus generated in China would he rechanneled into the hanks of Wall Street, the City of London, Frankfurt and Tokyo. This money would then he used to purchase corporate and also government seeurities in the American, European and Japanese imperialist states. The savings of China's workers and rural toilers would literally help to pay for the Pentagon's nuclear missiles aimed at China! As it is, the treacherous Beijing Stalinist bureaucraey—and this is a real crime against the Chinese people—is now purchasing U.S. Treasury hills with its large foreign-exchange reserves and has promised to purehase more.

In the past few years, the agencies of imperialist finance capital such as the International Monetary Fund have "advised" the Chinese government to reduce its budget deficit hy cutting hack especially on investment in infrastructure. Such a move toward fiscal austerity would destroy the livelihood of many of the poorest, most downtrodden of China's toilers. Urhan construction in Shanghai, Beijing, etc. mainly employs migrants from the countryside. The big interior projects (canal building, laying railway track) employ impoverished peasants and rural villagers. Furthermore, cutting back such projects would ***retard and reverse*** China's economic development. The extension of the railway system, for example, is absolutely essential to economically link the wealthier coastal provinces with the more backward regions of central and western China.

In recent months the main economic demand made by American, European and Japanese ruling circles on the Chinese government has heen to revalue the yuan upward. By increasing the price of China's manufactured goods in world markets, such a move would sharply reduce China's export earnings and volume. Many private as well as state-owned enterprises would he forced to lay off workers, reduce production and in some cases suffer bankruptcy.

Behind the current pressure from the American, West European and Japanese hourgeoisies is a more hasic assault on China's state-owned financial system. The imperialists want to force the Beijing regime to make the yuan fully convertible in order to open China to unrestricted financial penetration by the banks of Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo.

Privatization: Appearance and Reality

Over the past two decades a large fraction of state-owned industry—whether measured by number of enterprises, labor force or volume of production—has been privatized. Most small enterprises were simply sold off to individuals, typically the managers who had been running them. The larger enterprises, however, were "privatized" through a shareholding scheme. When, a decade or so ago, China opened its first stock market, much of the Western hourgeois media hailed this as proof positive that "Communist" China had taken a decisive step on the road to capitalism. But what has actually happened?

Of the 1,240 companies listed on China's two main stock exchanges, in some cases the government holds a majority of shares, in others a suhstantial minority. But even the latter remain effectively government-controlled because the CCP has retained a monopoly of political power. There is no workers democracy in China—hut neither is there shareholders' democracy. A disgruntled shareholder brash enough to organize a revolt to oust the incumhent management, typically politically well-connected CCP cadre, would likely find himself in a very bad place very rapidly.

Shareholders in China's corporations do ***not*** have ownership rights in the Western capitalist sense. They have the right to income from their financial assets and they can sell their shares, if they are smart

or lucky enough, for a net gain over the purchase price. But they cannot determine or even influence the management and corporate policies. These are determined by various and often conflicting political as well as economic pressures.

A clear example of this is Golden Summit, a cement-making enterprise in Leshan in the far western province of Sichuan. Formed in the late 1980s, Golden Summit was listed on the Shanghai stock exchange in the early 1990s. It turned out to be quite a profitable operation. In 1997, the company's general manager, Gu Song, also served (in a fairly common arrangement) as deputy secretary of the Leshan CCP. In that dual capacity he arranged for Golden Summit to take over Dadu River Steel, a state-owned enterprise in the city which, however, was losing money. Obviously, this acquisition made no economic sense. Why then was it done? Because the workers at Dadu River Steel had staged violent protests over unpaid wages. So the local CCP leadership utilized the ample cash reserves of Golden Summit to damp down labor unrest in its bailiwick. Thus a managerial decision affecting the company's financial condition was made on political, not economic grounds.

A recent book on China's financial structure by two academic economists in Australia describes the real character of the shareholding corporations:

> "The key problem in the case of China's stock markets is that the high ownership concentration actually reflects the continuing dominance of state ownership in many listed companies.... Thus, a market for corporate control is nonexistent for the overwhelming majority of listed companies and it can be concluded that managers face only a limited threat of punishment for poor decision making from either 'insiders' or 'outsiders.' It should also be noted that the influence of the state runs even deeper than their dominant ownership position."
>
> —James Laurenceson and Joseph C.H. Chai, *Financial Reform and Economic Development in China* (2003)

The authors then cite a study showing that "the state's representation on the board of directors of many listed companies far outweighed that which could be justified even on the basis of their sizeable ownership stake."

Furthermore, China's stock and also corporate bond markets still account for a very small fraction of total financial assets, which remain overwhelmingly concentrated in the state-owned banks. Thus shareholding corporations depend on bank loans for the bulk of their external financing. In short, the companies listed on the two major stock exchanges typically have the same management and similar financial arrangements as they did when they were wholly state-owned enterprises.

Someone might reasonably ask: that may be true today, but will it still be true tomorrow? The answer to that question will be determined by ***political conflict***, not a change in this or that regulation governing China's stock market.

Last summer foreign investors were allowed for the first time to purchase (within strict limits) the main class of shares (denominated in yuan) in China's stock markets. A single foreign investor can own no more than 10 percent of the market capital of a company, all foreign investors combined no more than 20 percent. The first financial outfit to take advantage of this opportunity was the big Swiss investment bank UBS which bought, among other companies, shares in Baoshan Iron and Steel, China's largest steel maker.

What would happen if UBS and other foreign banks were disappointed with the return on their investment in Baoshan? They probably would simply sell their shares, perhaps at a loss. But let us say that instead a group of Western banks bribed Chinese economic officials to support the ouster of Baoshan's incumbent management and replace them with new managers favored by these banks. Such an attempt by Western financiers to effectively take over China's largest steel maker would be a direct challenge to the political authority of the CCP regime. To maintain its authority, the Chinese government would have to prosecute the corrupted officials and take some kind of punitive measures against the foreign banks. If not, many managers of state-owned enterprises and banks would become paid agents of imperialist financiers and industrialists, the government would begin to lose its ability to carry out its own economic policies and the CCP would begin to disintegrate into an orgy of factionalism such as took place in the Soviet Communist Party during the Gorbachev era (1985-91).

But the factional disintegration of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy would also open up the political situation to the intervention of social forces ***from below***, centrally the working class. One would likely see the formation of independent trade unions and factory committees, of left-wing groups and parties. In the end, Western, Japanese and offshore Chinese capitalists could find their present foothold in the People's Republic of China destroyed by a proletarian political revolution.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Holiday Appeal...

(continued from page 5)

wake of the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution, the U.S. government and many states adopted a new wave of criminal syndicalism laws. The Palmer raids of early 1920 led to the arrests and deportations of thousands of leftists. Unions shrank almost to nonexistence and labor suffered nothing but defeats. In 1925, 25,000 KKK members felt free to parade fully robed down the streets of Washington, D.C. The 1920s saw widespread lynchings and racist pogroms. It was in this period that the American capitalist state constructed the deadly apparatus of political repression—with its vast army of spies and informers, local police "red squads," wiretaps and mail interceptions—that was later deployed by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI in the 1960s.

Upon its founding the ILD adopted 106 prisoners, instituting the policy of financially assisting these prisoners and their families. Representative of them were Mooney and Billings; Sacco and Vanzetti; Paul Crouch and Walter Trumbull, imprisoned for carrying on anti-militarist struggle while in the army; and IWW lumberjack John Burns, sentenced to four years for being caught with a sack of IWW literature. The number grew rapidly: Zeigler miners in Illinois whose fights over wages and working conditions pitted them head-on against the KKK; striking textile workers in Passaic, New Jersey. The ILD monthly, *Labor Defender*, educated tens of thousands of workers to the struggles of their class brothers, and carried letters from the prisoners describing their cases and the importance of ILD support.

The PDC revived the tradition of monthly stipends during the Reagan years, a period of rampant reaction marked by vicious racist repression, brutal union-busting, anti-immigrant hysteria, dismantling of fetters on the racist death penalty and malicious cutbacks in social services for the predominantly black and Hispanic poor. This was the era of the Cold War II anti-Soviet war drive, and behind this all-sided reaction was the capitalist rulers' efforts to regiment the population for war against the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state.

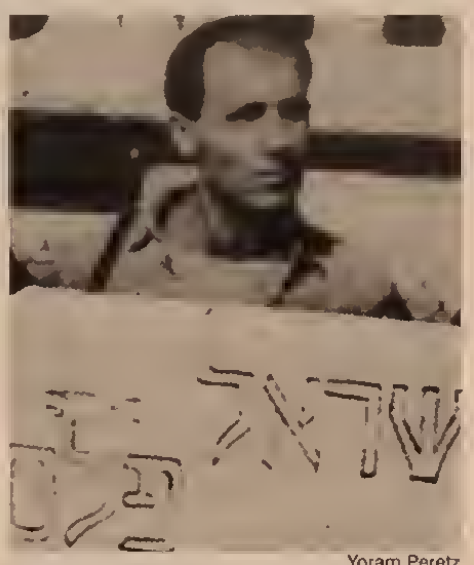
These policies fueled the rise of KKK, Nazi and skinhead terror. The PDC raised funds for the SL-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization of 5,000, many of whom were black trade unionists, which ran the Klan off the streets of D.C. on 27 November 1982. When the *Washington Times* slandered the SL as "provoking violence" against the cops, the PDC raised funds for the SL libel lawsuit which won a retraction.

Central to Reagan reaction was the criminalization of political opposition to the government's policies. FBI guidelines adopted in 1983 equated leftist political activities with "terrorism," RICO racketeering laws purportedly adopted to prosecute organized crime were used to break strikes and place unions under the control of government trustees. The PDC supported the SL suit against the FBI guidelines. As a result the FBI withdrew its witchhunting "definition" of the SL, thereby conceding that Marxist political principles cannot be equated with violence or terrorism. This was a victory for the entire left.

The opening salvo of the Reagan years was the firing of the entire PATCO air traffic controllers union during the 1981 strike, using plans drafted by Democrat Jimmy Carter. The Reagan years' defining event was the 13 May 1985 bombing of the Philadelphia MOVE commune, killing eleven black people, five of them children, and turning an entire city block to rubble and ash. This was a message to anyone—particularly black people—of what was in store for those who dared get out of line in capitalist America. While virtually all the rest of the left distanced themselves from the MOVE martyrs, so as not to embarrass black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode who ordered the assault, the SL immediately held a rally in New York City in support of MOVE. Among the first of our stipend recipients was Ramona Africa, the sole adult survivor of the MOVE bombing, and 12 other imprisoned MOVE members, eight of whom remain behind bars.

Class-struggle defense is a broad category. We are a small organization and must pick and choose those cases which exemplify key aspects of our Marxist program—e.g., trade-union militants, the fight against black oppression, defense of the former Soviet Union and other deformed workers states. Since initiating the stipends program, we have provided support to 33 prisoners on three continents. In the U.S., where black oppression forms the bedrock of American capitalism, a large proportion of the class-war prisoners have been black activists, including those thrown in prison hells for decades under the FBI's deadly COINTELPRO vendetta of the 1960s and '70s. Foremost among them was Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), former leader of the Black Panther Party in L.A., who until his release in 1997 was imprisoned 27 years for a murder the cops and FBI knew he didn't commit. FBI wiretaps, disappeared by the Feds, revealed that Geronimo was in San Francisco, 400 miles from the killing for which he was framed.

In 1987 the MOVE prisoners alerted us to the case of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, and we threw ourselves into his defense at a time when he was virtually unknown. The PDC, and our fraternal defense organizations abroad, sought to win support for Jamal's fight against the racist death penalty from those of all political walks of life. We have emphasized that this is a political death penalty case which illustrates the racism endemic in this country in its cruelest, most vicious form and lays bare the essence of the capitalist state. Beginning in 1989 we held rallies in cities across the country—and internationally—and did succeed in getting broader forces to take up his case.



Yoram Peretz

Mordechai Vanunu protesting for Palestinian rights one year before his 1986 arrest for revealing extent of Israeli nuclear arsenal.

Overseas, we sent stipends to Eddie McClelland and Mordechai Vanunu. McClelland, a supporter of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, was framed on charges related to the killing of three members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Northern Ireland, despite the fact he was nowhere near the scene and was never charged with the shootings. For exposing that Israel had an arsenal of some 200 nuclear weapons—sixth largest in the world—in 1986 Vanunu was kidnapped in Italy by Mossad agents and railroaded to prison for 18 years, most of them in solitary. As we uniquely noted, the Israeli nuclear arsenal, more than enough to destroy every Arab capital several times over, targeted the Soviet Union as well.

Our initiation of the stipends program came on the heels of the bitter 1984-85 British miners strike. The courageous miners held out for nearly a year against the vicious right-wing Thatcher government, which seized the miners union's funds, and the betrayals of the TUC trade-union tops. While the AFL-CIO tops gave not one penny to help the British miners, the PDC launched an international fund-raising campaign, raising over $23,000 for the Miners Solidarity Fund. Following the strike, the five miners who remained imprisoned—Terry French, Dean Hancock, Russell Shankland, Chris Tazey and Clive Thompson—were among the first of our stipend recipients.

In the U.S. we provided support to labor militants Amador Betancourt, framed up on felony charges for defending a strike by Teamsters Local 912 frozen food workers in Watsonville, California, and Bob Buck, member of Steelworkers Local 5668 in Ravenswood, West Virginia, who was slapped with a nearly three-year sentence for defending his union from scabs and thugs during a 1990-91 strike.

We hailed the Soviet troops who intervened on the side of the Afghan government against the CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries. After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, the Afghan army and heroic people of Jalalabad fought to preserve the most elementary social gains—the right to be educated, freedom from the veil for Afghan women, freedom from the yoke of a theocratic state. Our 1989 Jalalabad campaign raised over $44,000. But our side lost. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan ceded the country to woman-hating Islamic reactionaries funded, armed and trained by Washington. As we said at the time, better to fight counterrevolution in Afghanistan than in Moscow. And in short order, capitalist counterrevolution triumphed in the land of the October Revolution in 1991-92. For more than a decade the triumphalist imperialists, first and foremost the U.S., have acted as if they can do anything they want to the world's exploited and oppressed and get away with it. The Islamic reactionaries hailed by Reagan as "freedom fighters" provided the biggest Christmas gift of all to this country's bloody rulers when they flew two airplanes into the World Trade Center, providing the rationale long sought by Bush and his predecessors, Democrat Clinton included, to clamp down on dissent.

As Cannon taught, the labor defense work of the ILD was a "school for the class struggle." The lessons of that school were that the struggles of all the oppressed were inextricably linked and that the capitalist state—cops, courts and prisons—is an instrument of repression that cannot be pressured to serve the interests of the working class. What's called for is a socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist system and replace it with a society where those who labor rule. ■

North Korea...

(continued from page 3)

is overseeing the biggest wave of layoffs in Japanese history and cutting all social services. Comments over the summer by former cabinet minister Ota Seiichi and current cabinet secretary Fukuda—that men who commit gang rape are "virile" and normal, and that "leniency for rapists is thinkable"—give the green light to the gang rape of women.

Fearful of social unrest, the ruling class has increased its arsenal of repression, arresting youth who protest against the remilitarization of Japanese imperialism and the accompanying repressive domestic laws. The *juki-net* [new computerized registry] system strengthens the government's powers to spy on the population. Chinese immigrants have been targeted for mass deportation, and one government official advocated publicly beheading the parents of youth who commit crimes. Every prison is at more than 100 percent capacity, and the recent stories coming out of Nagoya and other prisons of the harassment, systematic torture and murder of prisoners underline that the capitalist state is composed of armed bodies of men and rests on the brutal exploitation of the working class.

Throughout the world, each capitalist government is enhancing police-state measures with the aim of regimenting the entire population, driving down wages, slashing social gains which were won through decades of class struggle, and whipping up hysteria over minorities and immigrants as an alleged "enemy within." As we wrote in *Spartacist Japan* (No. 26, September 2002):

> "The rise of racist demagogy, government attacks on immigrants and the threat of fascist terror bands can only be eradicated through a victorious struggle against the capitalist system. This perspective is the fundamental point of departure separating the ICL from all of our competitors in the workers movement.... It's not enough to protest, it's necessary to have a perspective to fight to transform society, to topple the rapacious imperialist system and create a workers state as the necessary first step on the road to a global classless society."
>
> —"Capitalist Europe's War on Immigrants Is a War on All Workers—Statement by the International Communist League" [see *WV* No. 784, 12 July 2002]

The fight to get rid of this arrogant, racist, capitalist government and in its place establish a government of the working class and its allies requires not just a struggle to beat back the attacks against the working class, women and youth. It also requires an uncompromising fight against the poisonous chauvinism and racism that divides the working class. Indifference to national oppression flows directly from a program of class collaboration with one's own bourgeoisie.

As the tribune of the people, we fight all manifestations of racism and discrimination as an integral part of building a Leninist-Trotskyist party which will lead all the working people in this country to state power. To achieve this task, the working class must be broken from the reformist left and trade-union leadership of all three union federations—which refuse to organize *zainichi* [ethnic Koreans] and immigrant workers into common unions with their Japanese class brothers and sisters. These misleaders transmit the chauvinism of the bourgeoisie into the proletariat, and are obstacles to the fight for a workers government.

The only way to eradicate unemployment, to provide decent housing, medical services and education for all, and to eliminate the danger of new imperialist wars is to expropriate the bourgeoisie. The potential power of the working class, whose role in production makes it the only force in society with the power and consistent interest to overthrow the bourgeoisie, has been held in check by the union bureaucrats who are politically tied to the [reformist] Communist and Social Democratic parties. These misleaders are prostrate before the owners of the means of production, refusing to wage any struggle against restructuring [downsizing and layoffs], much less against the capitalist economic system as a whole. We Trotskyists fight for a new revolutionary leadership of the working class—a proletarian, internationalist Leninist party.

Defense of Chosen Soren Is a Defense of All Working-Class Organizations

Since Koizumi's trip to North Korea in September 2002, there have been more than 300 deadly terrorist attacks nationwide against *zainichi Chosenjin* [ethnic Koreans sympathetic to North Korea] and their representative organizations. Korean children can't wear their school uniforms in public without fear of attack; those that attend public school are beaten up and humiliated on playgrounds. The offices and facilities of Chosen Soren and the banks and credit unions which service the Korean community have been systematically targeted by right-wing organizations throwing incendiary devices and shooting bullets.

In September 2003, Ishihara initiated procedures to seize the property of Chosen Soren headquarters on the pretext of up to 43 million yen in unpaid taxes, a reversal of previous policy that Chosen Soren functioned as a diplomatic mission. If Ishihara succeeds, Chosen Soren will lose its central headquarters, a branch office and a publishing office. This is a threat against the entire workers movement and sets a dangerous precedent for the government to confiscate the property and financial assets of trade unions and leftist organizations. Hands off Chosen Soren!

Yomiuri Shimbun

November 2001: Japanese riot police attack General Association of Korean Residents (Chosen Soren) at their building in Tokyo.

Robert Hunt Library

Japanese troops land in Korea in 1904, launching four decades of brutal colonial rule.

On July 29 in Niigata, a bullet was fired into a Chosen Soren facility, and a suspected bomb was thrown at the Hana Credit Union. On August 23, a bomb was found at the Chogin-nishi Shinkumi Bank in Hakata, Fukuoka, which serves the ethnic Korean community, and another one at the Fukuoka branch of Chosen Soren. That night, a bullet was fired at the Chogin-nishi bank's headquarters in Okayama.

We disagree with the leadership of Chosen Soren and other defenders of Koreans in this country who say that the way forward is to appeal to the Japanese government. The capitalist state is not a neutral power standing above classes. It is an armed body of men—police, courts, prisons, military—whose job is to defend and protect the property and privileges of the bourgeoisie. We place no reliance on this capitalist government because it is the enemy of the working class and oppressed. We place all our confidence in the mobilization of the working class.

The unabated deadly attacks underline the urgent necessity of united workers defense actions across ethnic and national lines. A 24-hour defense squad in front of a Nikkyoso office, a Chosen Soren office or at a Korean school threatened with attack would send a clear message to the militarists that they will be met with an organized response. The Japanese ruling class does not want Japanese-Korean solidarity, but it is the first thing that we need in order to set the ground rules that an attack on one is an attack on all.

The government's massive display of force at Niigata-Nishi port in August and September when the Mangyongbong-92 ferry docked was augmented by some 79 right-wing militarist groups, with more than a hundred sound trucks blaring their reactionary filth circling the port in an attempt to intimidate the more than 100 people who gathered to welcome the ferry. There were an equal number of protesters from the association of the families of the abducted and their supporters screaming for the ship to turn around. This ferry provides the only direct passenger link between Japan and North Korea. It also ships to North Korea tons of daily necessities and electrical appliances needed by a population living under siege by imperialism. Let the Mangyongbong-92 ferry travel unhindered!

Full Citizenship Rights for Everyone in This Country!

Recently the education ministry eased requirements for students attending international and ethnic schools to sit for exams for national universities if the schools' curricula match those of corresponding schools in their home country. This decision effectively bars students from pro-Pyongyang schools from sitting for these exams, and requires that they take the *daiken*, or special exam, to "prove that they have the academic ability" to take an entrance exam for a national university.

In the leadup to the government's decision, hundreds of leading academics along with Chosen Soren have protested the decision by the education ministry, which is a good thing. They correctly note that this decision is based on the fact that the presence of Chinese and Korean students "serves as a reminder of Japan's legacy of colonial rule and wartime military aggression" (Appeal to Ministry of Education, 2 March). However, their solution is to either appeal to the Japanese government, the very institution that imposed the decision, or to the United Nations. The majority of the people who make up today's ruling class are literally the grandchildren of those who ruled prewar Japan, who attempted to colonize all of Asia, raped Nanjing, enslaved hundreds of thousands of women as *ianfu* ["comfort

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women"], and brought millions of Chinese and Korean men to Japan to work as forced laborers. It was under the UN flag that three million Koreans were killed during the Korean War of 1950-53.

Education should be a right and not a privilege. We stand for free, quality, integrated education for all. Everyone who lives in this country should have the right to attend whatever school they want, and should receive a stipend while they study. We oppose the elitist tracking system whereby the kindergarten one attends determines the university that one can enter. We oppose the cozy relationship between the junior and senior high schools and companies which determine which student gets a job, and what that job will be. The administration of the schools should be abolished and the schools should be run by those who work and study there.

We fight for full citizenship rights for everyone who lives in this country, regardless of ethnic or national origin. We call for full access to housing, hospitalization, social services and welfare. We stand for the right of everyone to vote and run for public office at all levels. We fight to end the exclusion of minorities from employment at major corporations, and for integrated industrial unions. We demand that the *gaijin* [foreign resident] cards and *koseki* [family registry] system be ripped up. The *koseki* system is not just an affront to non-Japanese, but targets Burakumin [descendants of feudal-era outcasts] for second-class citizenship and denies the right of people who have changed their sex to register that information. We oppose all forced assimilation policies, and defend the right of minorities to retain any and all vestiges of their culture, language and customs—including the right to use their given family name.

North Korea and the Japanese Left

While the reformist left denounces the bourgeoisie's open revanchism, ideologically they accept many of its premises, including its class hatred toward North Korea. Historically, leftist organizations, reflecting the chauvinism of their "own" ruling class, have been virtually silent in response to the attacks on minorities. The Communist Party's constitution states that "only Japanese people over the age of 18" can be members of their organization (Chapter 1, Article 5). However, the attacks against ethnic Koreans have become so pervasive that even the left can't ignore them, and have headlined in their newspapers, "Don't Permit Attacks Against Koreans." But, as we wrote in our leaflet denouncing the racist, anti-communist murder of Chosen Soren leader Ra Hun in 1998, "The complete prostration of the Japanese left and trade-union bureaucracy before their own bourgeoisie has helped create the social climate where these acts of fascistic terror occur unanswered." Articles written by the Communist Party, Kakumaru and the "Kakehashi" group in 1998 when North Korea launched a missile over Japan—and again in 1999 when the Japanese coast guard attempted to sink North Korean ships in the Sea of Japan—sided with the Japanese government in their campaign to demonize North Korea.

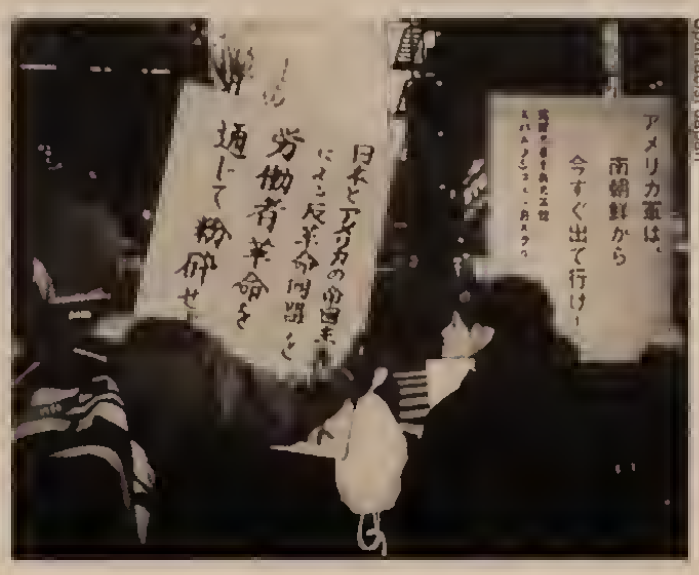
Those of you who have read our newspaper over the years know that we frequently polemicize against "Kakehashi" [which is politically affiliated with the Mandelite United Secretariat]. However, it is difficult to polemicize against an organization that has become so wretched that its positions on some questions are to the right of the government. It was the revelation that two small groups of Japanese people were kidnapped by North Korea two decades ago that tore the last thin veil of socialist coloring off "Kakehashi" and exposed their true nationalist sentiments.

As we wrote in *Spartacist Japan* No. 26 (September 2002):

> "The endless stories about abducted Japanese and demands that North Korea open its country for nuclear inspections are propaganda campaigns designed to erase Japanese imperialism's crimes before and during World War II and are intended to portray Japan—the second most powerful imperialist country in the world—as the victim....
>
> "It is precisely because the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy in Pyongyang does not see the world proletariat as its ally against imperialism that it carries out bizarre and idiotic acts such as abductions of what appear to be just regular people. Despite the bureaucratic deformations, our defense of North Korea against the class enemy is unconditional; that means it does not depend on the prior overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy, nor on the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict."

"Kakehashi" calls on both the Japanese and North Korean governments to fulfill all the demands of the association of families who were kidnapped. These demands include the dispatch of Japanese police to North Korea to search for more Japanese people that supposedly have been kidnapped. "Kakehashi" members participated in a July 20 meeting held in Tokyo by the group supporting the families of the abductees. This is the same organization that was welcomed by U.S. arms control chief John Bolton on September 13, where they agreed that a "regime change" was necessary in Pyongyang. At the meeting in Tokyo, the leader of the group called for economic sanctions against North Korea. "Kakehashi" demands that the children of the abducted be returned—to Japan! These children have been born, raised and educated in North Korea, and have never set foot on Japanese soil! Last year, when the children's parents, the five abducted, stated that they wanted to go "home," i.e., to North Korea, they were told that they were brainwashed. Cabinet secretary Fukuda made it very clear that the government had every intention of keeping them here for propaganda purposes when he said that the five would not be allowed back to North Korea "regardless of their intentions" (*New Left Review*, November-December 2002).

Chukaku characterizes China and North Korea as "Stalinist states," and the document for their sixth conference calls for the overthrow of these states: "There is no other way to stop the process of a third world war than to overthrow imperialism and the remaining Stalinism" (*Zenshin*, 12 August 2002). Recently they have upheld the position that "the Korean people should decide the fate of the Korean peninsula." What "Korean people"? Roh Moo Hyun, the current president of South Korea who has unleashed the South Korean military against striking workers and arrested pro-unification students? Or maybe the Hyundai *chaebol*, one of the biggest exploiters of labor in the world, which spearheaded together with Kim Dae Jung the "Sunshine Policy" that seeks to unite Korea on a capitalist basis?



31 December 2002: Tokyo protest against U.S. troops in Korea. Spartacist Group Japan sign on left reads: "Smash the Counterrevolutionary Alliance Between Japanese and American Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!"

For a Multiethnic Revolutionary Workers Party in Japan!

The Korean peninsula is divided by a class line, and South Korea is a class-divided society. The only way forward for the Korean working masses is through revolutionary reunification of the Korean peninsula. This means workers socialist revolution in the South and proletarian political revolution in the North. A workers Korea would be a tremendous inspiration to the working people in this country. It would also immediately face imperialist encirclement, similar to what the North Korean deformed workers state faces today. The Korean population in Japan, most of whose ancestors were forcibly brought here, is a living link to the struggles on the peninsula.

A revolutionary party in Japan will have a heavy component of Koreans, Burakumin, Ainus and the numerous minorities that now make up the working class. This party, in coordination with the American workers party, will do its utmost to ensure the safety of the Korean proletarian dictatorship by overthrowing the two most powerful imperialist ruling classes in history, thereby laying the basis for an international socialist world order.

The conquest of state power by the proletariat requires political consciousness. Such consciousness must be brought to the workers by a revolutionary, internationalist party which will unify the class across the national and sectional boundaries which divide it and coordinate the interdependent struggles of the workers in every country. To accomplish this historic task, the working class must be broken from its reformist, pro-capitalist trade-union and leftist misleaders and won to a Marxist leadership. This is the perspective of the Spartacist Group Japan.■

L.A. Strike...

(continued from page 12)

undocumented immigrant workers at the giant non-union Wal-Mart chain underscored that the defense of immigrant rights is also critical to revitalizing the labor movement through organizing the unorganized.

The labor movement must oppose the "national unity" barrage pushed by the bosses and echoed by their labor lieutenants, which is used to justify the imperialist rape and occupation of Iraq abroad and a domestic "war on terror" that is in fact a war against immigrants, black people and all of labor. The same ruling class that is slaughtering Iraqis is also bent on destroying the hard-won gains of working people and minorities in America.

For Class Unity in Struggle!

Another leftist group besides the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club that has been active in supporting the transit and supermarket strikes is the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), which publishes *Challenge*. PLP has promoted rank-and-file rallies outside MTA headquarters, which have drawn upwards of a hundred workers. In an undated leaflet to transit strikers titled, "Rely on Rulers' Laws or on Workers' Power?" PLP rightly attacked Silver's call for binding arbitration and declared: "We are not alone! Thousands of supermarket workers are also on strike. They and millions of other workers, millions of students and soldiers who have everything to lose and nothing to gain in a war for oil profits and a capitalist war economy, make up a potential army against the bosses' attacks."

Yet only a few lines above, this same PLP leaflet moaned, "Even if we don't win this current battle, it's because the correlation of forces doesn't seem to favor us now." As PLP itself makes clear, the correlation of forces is potentially very much in favor of the strikers. Yet PLP accepted in advance that the labor bureaucracy's losing strategy could not be overcome and would lead to defeat, and proposed nothing more than to mount "wildcat strikes" behind the backs of the bureaucrats *after the strike loses*. PLP talks a fine line about storming the citadel of the American imperialist state, but the truth is it can't even offer a perspective for a political struggle against the sellout policies of the capitalists' lieutenants within the labor movement.

Much rides on a victory in these strikes. Defense of health benefits, a key issue in both the transit and supermarket strikes, has been a central question facing all of labor in recent years as the bourgeoisie seeks to shift the soaring cost of health care onto the working class. We Marxists say: Free, quality health care for all!

We fight for a workers party built in the crucible of big class battles out of which will emerge a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions. Such a leadership must be based on a program of militant struggle against the entire capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Break with the Democrats—For a workers party that fights for a socialist revolution to expropriate the bourgeoisie and place the workers in power!■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

For a Fighting Workers Party!

Bureaucrats, Democrats Knife L.A. Transit Workers

LOS ANGELES, November 18—Only ten days after his membership voted by a resounding 93 percent to reject the L.A. transit bosses' insulting "last, best, final" offer, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1277 president Neil Silver yesterday instructed 2,000 striking mechanics and maintenance workers to dismantle their picket lines and go back to work. Standing with Silver as he announced this betrayal on TV was Democratic county supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, head of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) board, and Democratic city councilman Antonio Villaraigosa (as well as L.A. mayor Jim Hahn), key architects of the sellout deal. After five bitter weeks on the picket lines, ATU members are being told to go back to work before they have even had a chance to vote on the MTA's rotten new contract and with the central issue of the strike—the future of their union health benefits—left in the hands of a pro-company "mediation" committee.

As ATU members meet tomorrow morning for a ratification vote, they should throw this sellout back in the faces of the ATU misleaders and their Democratic Party patrons and demand a mass meeting of *all* transit unions to hammer out a strategy *to continue, extend and win the strike*. The bus and train drivers in the United Transportation Union (UTU) and clerks and custodians in the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU) are now left hanging high and dry, ordered back to work without a contract. As we wrote at the start of the current strikes ("L.A. Strike City," *WV* No. 812, 24 October):

> "No one should go back to work until everyone has a contract! All UTU drivers, Teamster transit workers and TCU members should be out on the picket lines alongside the ATU. *All* the regional buses and Metrolink rail lines which bring in the suburban business commuters should be shut down. What's needed is a single industrial transit union from Santa Monica to Foothill, San Fernando Valley to Long Beach."

But instead of fighting, Silver had earlier proposed to take down the picket lines and commit the workers to "binding arbitration" (a scheme rejected by the MTA), following the lead of Villaraigosa and fellow Democrat Martin Ludlow. Silver also trumpeted a court decision allowing Villaraigosa, Ludlow, Hahn and another Democrat to participate in the negotiations. Showing mistaken illusions in the Democrats as "friends of labor," many workers applauded this announcement. In fact, Villaraigosa and Ludlow *are members of the MTA board, i.e., on the bosses' side of the strike*. The Democratic Party is a capitalist party, no less an enemy of working people than the Republican Party.

The central lesson workers must understand to win this and future class battles is the need for a policy of class struggle based on unconditional independence from the bosses' state and political parties. This is critical not least for the fate of the 70,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) who have been pitted in battle for five weeks against three giant supermarket chains—Albertsons, Ralphs (owned by Kroger) and Vons (owned by Safeway). UFCW leaders have turned strike support rallies into platforms for Democratic Party politicians feigning sympathy for the supermarket workers only in order to stab them in the back.

On November 10, 4,000 UFCW strikers and other trade unionists, including longshoremen, Teamsters and teachers, joined in a spirited strike support rally in San Pedro. Instead of simply turning out for rallies, the Teamsters union should instruct all its members to stop deliveries to the markets and to *shut down the distribution centers operated by UFCW and Teamster members, which is the key to victory.* With thousands of UFCW members already on strike in Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio and thousands more working without a contract in Arizona and Indiana, the supermarket strike should be extended within California and against the struck supermarket chains nationally.

Writing at the advent of the modern labor movement more than 150 years ago, Karl Marx said in *Wage Labour and Capital* (1849): "The interests of capital and the interests of wage labour are diametrically opposed to each other." The labor bureaucrats, from the national AFL-CIO tops on down, reject this elementary understanding. Wedded to the capitalist system, the labor tops are driven to increasingly subordinate the unions to the capitalist state—whether through binding arbitration, support to the bosses' parties or acquiescence to direct government intervention. Their entire strategy rests on a program of class collaboration, a purely electoral and legalistic strategy of lobbying for pro-labor legislation and voting Democrat.

The bureaucrats' reliance on "binding arbitration" or government "mediation" is premised on the lie that the capitalist state is a neutral arbiter rather than an apparatus of repression aimed at defending the power and profits of the exploiting class against the working class and oppressed minorities. Strikes are won or lost on the picket lines. When picket lines are taken down, the union throws away its main weapon, the ability to withhold labor. Echoed by Yaroslavsky, the L.A. bourgeoisie's mouthpiece, the *Los Angeles Times* (18 November), now demands that this sellout lay the basis for effectively stripping transit workers of the right to strike ever again, insisting: "Now the trick is to extend the arbitration deal to head off future strikes."

The only road to victory lies in mobilizing labor's power independently of and in opposition to the Democratic and Republican parties. The working people need a party that fights for *their* class interests, a workers party committed to overturning this whole system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression.

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

A labor victory in historically anti-union L.A. would inspire workers around the country. A defeat would embolden the forces of anti-immigrant racism and anti-union reaction everywhere.

AP

November 17: Democratic councilman Antonio Villaraigosa (left) and L.A. mayor Jim Hahn stand behind ATU president Neil Silver as he announces sellout of transit strike.

This was made clear when six skinheads screaming "Heil Hitler!" and racist slurs against blacks and Latinos attacked a UFCW picket line with baseball bats outside an Albertsons supermarket in Laguna Niguel, Orange County on November 9. One picket, Michael Gallagher, was left bleeding and suffering a concussion. If a security guard had not shot a gun into the air, Gallagher and other picketers might have been killed. It is an indictment of the policies of the labor misleadership that the only thing standing between these workers and a deadly fascist assault was a security guard, a hired thug for the company whose job is to protect the bosses' property and attack strikers. The unions should have immediately mobilized thousands of workers to the Laguna Niguel picket line. If there is to be no more workers' blood on the pavement, it is urgently necessary to *organize picket defense guards*, drawing in all of Southern California labor and the minorities and immigrants who bear the brunt of fascist terror.

This ominous attack on a picket line underscores the commonality of interests of the multiracial labor movement and the black, Latino and immigrant minorities. Orange County has been a hotbed of fascist threats and terror against black people and Latinos for years. Earlier that week, the Nazi punks had tried to run over pickets at Laguna Niguel with a truck and shouted "White power!" at the workers. Yet the UFCW tops have done nothing. In the face of similar fascist provocations over the years from San Francisco to Atlanta to Washington, D.C. and New York, the Spartacist League and its affiliated legal and social defense organization, the Partisan Defense Committee, have initiated mass labor/black mobilizations—drawing on the social power of the trade unions—to *stop the KKK/Nazis*.

This is what a fighting labor movement led by a class-struggle workers party would do, championing the cause of all the oppressed, combatting every manifestation of anti-black racism and demanding full citizenship rights for all immigrants. The recent roundups of

continued on page 11

Victory to UFCW Supermarket Strike!

AP

Picket line outside Vons supermarket in Pasadena on first day of UFCW strike, October 12. Key to victory lies in spreading strike, shutting down distribution centers.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 815 — 5 December 2003

Break with the Democrats, the Other Party of War and Racism! For a Workers Party!

U.S. Occupation Forces Out of Iraq Now!

No Illusions in the UN!

We print below, edited for publication, a presentation by Spartacist League member Kathleen Harris given at an SL forum in New York City on November 13.

On October 25, as probably most of you know, there was a pretty big demonstration in Washington, D.C. against the occupation of Iraq. We were there, of course. Comrades got into some interesting conversations, got names of people interested in learning more about socialism and sold a lot of our literature. In talking about it afterwards, though, one comrade remarked that people kept saying "we"—as in "We have to pull our troops out of Iraq," or "Why did we oppose the United Nations in going to war?" The UN and the occupation troops are obviously political questions, which I'm going to try to address tonight. But I'm going to start with a Marxist grammar lesson and pick on this pronoun "we." Because if you're interested in changing this country and the world we're living in, you have to start by recognizing that it can't be done as long as you buy into the idea embodied in "we the people."

That phrase—or the version of it that was rammed down all our throats especially after September 11, "United we stand"—is a myth. It's designed and utilized to obscure the huge and growing divide between the oppressed who make up the vast majority of the world, and the arrogant and powerful capitalist class seeking to dominate and exploit them for its own interests.

The idea that there is one American people, or one German people, or one Iraqi people, all of whom are responsible for the actions of their respective ruling classes, is accepted among all sorts of political tendencies. It's one thing shared by the Bush administration and the criminals who rammed passenger jets into the World Trade Center. In perpetuating the idea that American dishwashers and secretaries share responsibility for the crimes of U.S. imperialism, these murderers did a real service to the world's biggest terrorists, the U.S. imperialists, who seized the opportunity they'd been waiting for to whip up patriotism here and slam U.S. troops into the Near East.

Reuters photos

Above: U.S. occupation troops terrorize Baghdad neighborhood, October 27. Below: U.S. Army vehicle destroyed by anti-occupation insurgents in Falluja, October 22.

The obvious question, of course, is why? What makes Iraq, or a vastly more backward, tribal country like Afghanistan, such a prize to the Bush administration that it's obviously staked so much on trying to control them? The way it's described by liberals, Greens and some so-called Marxists can be boiled down to this: Iraq has oil, yuppies need it to drive their SUVs. Therefore, the U.S. is grabbing it so Americans can continue in their selfish, petroleum-burning, ozone-destroying lifestyles. But this really doesn't cut it. If you took that kind of argument to its logical conclusion, you would have to conclude that the reason for the Reagan administration's invasion of the tiny black Caribbean island of Grenada in the early '80s was because they absolutely had to have *its* key export, nutmeg.

There are various reasons imperialism breeds war—not as a consciously chosen policy (which would mean that the imperialists can also choose *not* to pursue it) but, inevitably, as a product of the capitalist system. With Iraq, the U.S. imperialists wanted to show that defying them isn't going to be tolerated. A woman named Ellen Meiksins Wood, who's obviously some kind of Marxist, made this point in a really effective, clear speech at "Marxism 2003," a conference in London, this past summer. In the speech, which was reprinted in *Against the Current* (No. 106, September-October 2003), Wood underlined a point we've made in *WV* from the beginning:

> "Sure, in Iraq there's the question of oil, and also the consolidation of the U.S. military presence in the region, while getting out of Saudi Arabia. But I think it's safe to say that, whatever other objectives the United States may have had, one of their main objectives was, in their own words, 'shock and awe'—not just to shock and awe Saddam Hussein or even other recalcitrant regimes in the region, though that was certainly a major factor, especially in relation to Iran, but also to shock and awe the whole world, not least its own allies."

In another part of the speech addressing the massive strength of the U.S. military, she commented, "This force is not just bigger and more powerful than any single conceivable enemy, or even all enemies combined, but—and this may be even more important—bigger and more powerful than all its friendly competitors, singly or together." In his 1916 work *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin defined imperialism as "a struggle of the great powers for the economic and political division of the world," characterized by the quest for spheres of influence, for the control of markets, raw materials and cheap labor.

We insisted it was urgently necessary to *take the side of Iraq* against the vastly more powerful forces of U.S. imperialism. Leninists have long argued that in a war between an oppressed semicolonial country and an imperialist power like the U.S., a defeat of the imperialists represents a victory for the oppressed all over the world. There's a qualitative difference between bloody U.S. imperialism, the pre-eminent imperialist power of the world that has slaughtered and will continue to slaughter millions upon millions of people, and a tinpot dictatorship such as Hussein's Iraq.

Hussein was a bloody dictator. This fact didn't bother the U.S. when he was useful to them. The U.S. helped install his party, the Ba'ath Party, in power, first

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China

Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!...4

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End the Receivership of Local 241!
Prepare for Strike Action of All Transit Workers!

Chicago Transit Workers Under the Gun

CHICAGO, December 1—In a clear confirmation of the anti-union, pro-capitalist nature of "binding arbitration," a labor arbitrator has handed the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) a victory over the drivers, mechanics and other bus division workers of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241. On November 21, after working without a contract for four years, ATU members had a rotten contract rammed down their throats that attacks the jobs, working conditions and incomes of the members of this predominantly black workforce.

Local 241's contract expires on December 31, the same day as the sellout deal thrust upon the rail division workers of ATU Local 308. In May 2001, Local 308 president Jerry Williams broke with the tradition of joint bargaining by Locals 241 and 308, negotiating a separate contract with the CTA. After the Local 308 membership became aware of the consequences of Williams' shameless givebacks and concessions, he was voted out of office—and was then quickly rewarded by the company with a management job.

Workers should reject any attempts by the ATU bureaucrats to once again extend the existing contract, which can only lead to a rerun—getting screwed via arbitration or a sweetheart deal for the company. The upcoming contract expirations should be the occasion for a powerful joint fight by the transit unions against the CTA, which is essential to stopping the company assault on union jobs.

But earlier this year, the ATU International placed Local 241 in receivership, paving the way for the arbitrator's ruling. The International bureaucracy's receivership ("trusteeship") of Local 241 ties the union's hands behind its back. It's a vital task for all Chicago ATU members to break the no-struggle, anti-democratic "trusteeship" that deprives members of the right to elect their representatives and even the right to vote on issues at a union meeting.

Bus division transit workers must take back their local and elect a leadership based on a program of class struggle. Militants in both ATU locals should fight to build a joint mass meeting to prepare a strike, including all 17 unions representing CTA workers. Transit workers have the power to slow the nation's third-largest city to a crawl and turn the Loop (downtown Chicago) into a parking lot. No contract, no work! One out, all out! This would pave the way for a single industrial union representing all Chicago transit workers.

Conscious militants know that in today's climate, many workers feel real apprehension about going out in the face of a sagging economy and actively hostile governments in the White House and City Hall. But the hard fact is that anything the labor movement has ever won is the result of union organization and determination on the picket lines. Look at the recent strike by Chicago sanitation workers, who told the bosses to shove their "last best offer," stood firm on the picket lines for nine days and won a pay hike with no cuts in their health benefits.

WV Photo

ATU Local 241 members at downtown Chicago contract rally, January 24.

The Local 241 arbitration settlement must have filled nearly every item on the company's Christmas list. ATU members are justly angry at being cheated of back pay, and now face attacks on work schedules ("rostering") and the

continued on page 11

Stalinist Bureaucratism and the Workers State

TROTSKY

LENIN

As was the case in the USSR and East Europe, the continued misrule of a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy in China opens the door to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution. Writing of the Soviet degenerated workers state under Stalin in the 1930s, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky stressed that the alternative to capitalist restoration lay in a proletarian political revolution that installed a government based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

The further unhindered development of bureaucratism must lead inevitably to the cessation of economic and cultural growth, to a terrible social crisis and to the downward plunge of the entire society. But this would imply not only the collapse of the proletarian dictatorship but also the end of bureaucratic domination. In place of the workers' state would come not "social bureaucratic" but capitalist relations.

We trust that by thus posing the question in perspective we shall be able, once for all, to probe thoroughly into the controversy over the class nature of the USSR; whether we take the variant of further successes for the Soviet regime or, contrariwise, the variant of its collapse, the bureaucracy in either case turns out to be not an independent class but an excrescence upon the proletariat. A tumor can grow to tremendous size and even strangle the living organism, but a tumor can never become an independent organism.

Finally, we may add for the sake of complete clarity: if in the USSR today the Marxist party were in power, it would renovate the entire political regime; it would shuffle and purge the bureaucracy and place it under the control of the masses; it would transform all of the administrative practices and inaugurate a series of capital reforms in the management of economy; but in no case would it have to undertake an ***overturn in the property relations, i.e., a new social revolution.***

—Leon Trotsky, "The Class Nature of the Soviet State" (October 1933)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 2 December.

No. 815 **5 December 2003**

Free Palestinian Activist Farouk Abdel-Muhti!

The following protest letter was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, on December 1. Farouk Abdel-Muhti is currently in solitary confinement. Protest letters should be sent to David J. Venturella, Assistant Commissioner for Detention and Removal, Headquarters Post Detention Unit, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 801 I Street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, D.C. 20536.

We write in outrage over the brutal beating of immigrant detainee and Palestinian activist Farouk Abdel-Muhti. On November 19, 2003, two Bergen County Jail prison guards punched and kicked Mr. Abdel-Muhti to the ground for the supposed crime of having literature critical of the government, including that published by the Partisan Defense Committee. Just who are these armed thugs to censor what Mr. Abdel-Muhti or any other prisoner reads? To call this a grotesque violation of First Amendment rights would seem an understatement. We have also been told Mr. Abdel-Muhti's medicine for high blood pressure and a thyroid condition has been confiscated. We demand a stop to the brutalization of this political prisoner.

Farouk Abdel-Muhti was abducted from his Queens apartment in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 and has been unjustly incarcerated for 583 days! He should not have spent even a second in your facilities. He was arrested in April 2002 only because he was an outspoken activist for the besieged Palestinian people. For more than a year and a half Mr. Ahdel-Muhti has been shunted from prison to prison and singled out for special punishment because of his political beliefs. You are surely aware that Mr. Abdel-Muhti's continued imprisonment comes in violation of your own repressive standards. In the 2001 case *Zadvydas v. Davis*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that immigrants facing deportation could only be detained for a maximum of six months. As we have from the onset of his abduction and detention, the Partisan Defense Committee once again demands that Farouk Abdel-Muhti be released immediately!

The despicable treatment of Farouk Abdel-Muhti is representative of the fate of unknown hundreds of immigrant detainees facing wholesale violations of civil liberties, not to mention norms of human decency. This is part of a systematic campaign representing a qualitative diminution of rights for workers and the oppressed which goes along with the U.S. war against and occupation of Iraq. We continue to struggle for the freedom of all the detainees.

We say again: Free Farouk Abdel-Muhti now! ■

Letter

On ILWU Support for UFCW Strike

New York City
21 November 2003

Dear *Workers Vanguard*,

The article "Bureaucrats, Democrats Knife L.A. Transit Workers" (*WV* No. 814, 21 November) refers to a November 10 rally of 4,000 trade unionists held in San Pedro in solidarity with the UFCW strike against three Southern California supermarket chains and notes the participation in the rally of longshoremen, Teamsters and teachers. In reporting on this, the article failed to mention an important aspect of the event: longshoremen organized in ILWU Local 13 called a stop work meeting (using a provision in their contract) in order to join this rally. Some 3,000 longshoremen joined a UFCW picket of locked-out UFCW members outside an Albertsons market, shutting it down for an hour, and then marched on to the rally. The ILWU stop work meeting meant that the entire Port of Los Angeles/Long Beach was effectively shut down for the whole eight-hour swing shift and that longshoremen forfeited their pay. This act of labor solidarity with the UFCW strike by one of the most powerful unions in Los Angeles, interrupting the normal course of shipping at the port, was a good example of what *WV* has been arguing for since the inception of the strike—the need to broaden and extend class struggle actions and build mass pickets in defense of striking supermarket workers. It should be a starting point for wider and more militant labor actions in solidarity with the UFCW strikers.

Comradely,
George Foster

75 Years Ago: American Trotskyist Press Founded

November 15 marked the 75th anniversary of the launching of the first Trotskyist newspaper in the U.S., the *Militant*, published by the Communist League of America (CLA) and, in later years, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Describing itself as the "Semi-Monthly Organ of the Opposition Group in the Workers (Communist) Party of America," the first issue carried on its front page a statement by James P. Cannon, Martin Abern and Max Shachtman titled "For the Russian Opposition!" Cannon was a leader of the early American Communist Party (CP); Shachtman and Abern began as leaders of its youth affiliate, and were also members of the CP's National Committee.

All three had been expelled from the CP on 27 October 1928 for their adherence to Leon Trotsky's International Left Opposition (ILO) and its political program. Cannon had gone to the 1928 Sixth Congress of the Communist International (CI) where, fortuitously, he was placed on the Program Commission and was able to read Trotsky's devastating critique of the policies and program of the CI under the leadership of Stalin and his then ally, Bukharin.

By early 1924, a nationalist bureaucratic caste led by Stalin had begun to consolidate control over the Bolshevik Party and the CI. This was to take on programmatic expression in late 1924, as the Stalinist bureaucracy propounded the anti-Marxist dogma of building "socialism in one country." "For the Russian Opposition!" stated: "The attempts to revise the basic Marxist-Leninist doctrine with the spurious theory of 'socialism in one country' have been rightly resisted by the Opposition led by Trotsky. A number of revisionist and opportunist errors in various fields of Comintern activity and its ideological life in general have proceeded from this false theory." These questions were fully addressed in Trotsky's critique and provided the programmatic basis for organizing the ILO, centrally opposition to "socialism in one country"; to remaining in the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee after the British labor bureaucracy's betrayal of the 1926 General Strike; and to the liquidation of the Chinese Communist Party into the bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang in the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution, leading to the uprising's bloody defeat.

The Militant

Semi-Monthly Organ of the Opposition Group in the Workers (Communist) Party of America.

MILITANT

For the Russian Opposition!

Against Opportunism and Bureaucracy in the Workers Communist Party of America!

A STATEMENT TO AMERICAN COMMUNISTS BY JAMES P. CANNON MARTIN ABERN AND MAX SHACHTMAN

Institute for Social History, Amsterdam

Left: First issue of *Militant*, launched in 1928, declares support for International Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky (below).

It is no accident that the very first issue of the *Militant* carried an article titled "The Fortress of the World Revolution," reprinted below, solidarizing with the victory of the 1917 Russian Revolution on its eleventh anniversary. The ILO embodied the political continuity of authentic Leninism and the proletarian internationalism that had inspired the October Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party.

Beginning with its first issue, the *Militant* serialized those portions of Trotsky's critique that Cannon brought back from Moscow. The complete document was subsequently published as *The Third International After Lenin*. An introduction by Cannon to a 1929 pamphlet titled *The Draft Program of the Communist International—A Criticism of Fundamentals*, containing those portions Cannon brought back from Moscow, stated:

> "Trotsky's Criticism of the Draft Program comes to grips with the principal theoretical error which sums up and motivates the opportunist tactics pursued in recent years in the internal questions of the Soviet Union as well as in the International movement: the revisionist theory of socialism in one country. Basing himself on the fundamental teachings of Marx and Lenin, Trotsky turns all his guns on this new revisionism which has been smuggled into the Communist International since Lenin died, to its great detriment. He attacks it from all sides, tearing away the covering of falsely applied quotations from Lenin and reveals its non-Leninist essence, battering down the whole structure of falsification and scholasticism upon which it is built."

This introduction appears as an appendix to the 1936 Pioneer Publishers edition of *The Third International After Lenin*. It is inexplicably not listed in the Table of Contents and has never been reprinted since—either in subsequent editions of *The Third International After Lenin* or in Cannon's own writings—unfortunately making this fine piece of early Trotskyist writing fairly inaccessible.

In his *History of American Trotskyism* (1944), Cannon pointed to the international significance of the emergence of an Opposition group in the U.S.:

> "With this inspiring news of a new detachment in far-away America, the little papers and bulletins of the Opposition groups flared into life again. Most inspiring of all to us was the assurance that our hard-pressed Russian comrades had heard our voice. I have always thought of this as one of the most gratifying aspects of the historic fight we undertook in 1928—that the news of our fight reached the Russian comrades in all corners of the prisons and exile camps inspiring them with new hope and new energy to persevere in the struggle."

Though a weekly named the *Militant* continues to be published by Jack Barnes' SWP, it is an organ not of revolutionary Trotskyism but of the Barnesites' quirky reformism. The continuity of the revolutionary heritage of Cannon's SWP and Trotsky's Fourth International is now upheld by the International Communist League. The Spartacist League, U.S. section of the ICL, originated as the Revolutionary Tendency, expelled in 1963 for opposition to the SWP's centrist degeneration, which by 1965 had deepened into outright reformism (see "The SWP—A Strangled Party," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 38-39, Summer 1986).

Following Trotsky's injunction, the ICL fought to the bitter end to defend the gains of the October Revolution when the Stalinists opened the floodgates to capitalist counterrevolution, first in the East German deformed workers state in 1989-90 and then in the Soviet Union itself. In East Germany, we threw the forces of our international into the struggle against the capitalist annexation of that country by the West German bourgeoisie, fighting for a Red Soviet Germany through proletarian political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West. In the aftermath of the destruction of the Soviet degenerated

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Prometheus Research Library Books

Dog Days: James P. Cannon vs. Max Shachtman in the Communist League of America, 1931-1933

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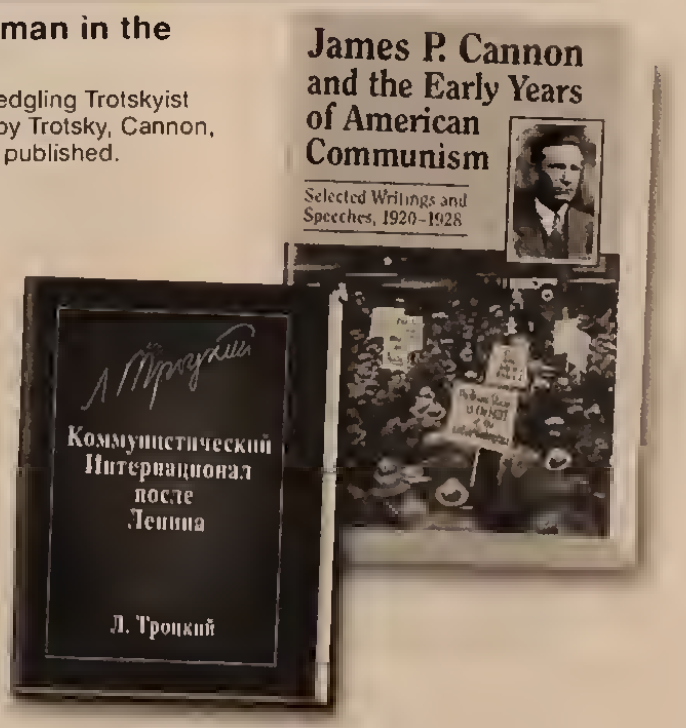

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China

Defend, Extend Gains of 1949 Revolution!
For Workers Political Revolution to Oust Stalinist Bureaucracy!

Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!

Part one of this article, which we conclude below, appeared in WV *No. 814 (21 November).*

The main structural change that has taken place in China's economy over the past two decades is the way in which state-owned enterprises are financed. Under the old centralized planning system, enterprises whose costs for whatever reason exceeded their normal revenue received non-repayable grants from the industrial ministry overseeing them. Likewise, non-repayable grants were used to finance the expansion of enterprise production through retooling, the construction of a new department, etc.

PART TWO

When "market socialism" was introduced in the early 1980s, enterprises were supposed to become profit-maximizing and financially self-sufficient. External financing would be provided by loans from state-owned commercial banks, which were supposed to be repaid with interest. We do not know if Deng and the other initial architects of the "reform" program actually expected the system to work according to the new economic doctrine and corresponding policy guidelines. Predictably, the system did *not* work. Had all enterprises which did not and could not repay their bank loans been closed down, China would long since have become a complete economic disaster area. But that was not allowed to happen. Instead, in a totally unplanned, inadequate and haphazard way, "non-performing" bank loans were substituted for direct government financing.

Bank loans to loss-making as well as profit-making enterprises are routinely rolled over or even increased without any realistic expectation of repayment. Consequently, all major Chinese banks are technically "insolvent," with "non-performing loans" exceeding income-generating assets. This situation has persisted for many years, since the government finances the banks which, in turn, finance the enterprises.

Thus in 1998-99 the central bank gave $200 billion to the main commercial banks in exchange for an equivalent amount of their "non-performing loans." This enterprise debt was then shifted to government-owned Asset Management Companies (AMCs), which were supposed to collect a portion of them and/or sell off the delinquent enterprises to private buyers. Since then the AMCs have done little of the one or the other.

The relative stability of China's financial system has rested on two main factors. One, everyone knows the government stands behind the banks. And two, private and especially foreign banks have not (yet) been allowed to compete with them. A report last year by Moody's, the big American financial credit-rating agency, concluded: "While China's banking system may technically be insolvent, abundant levels of liquidity act as a cushion against stress. The strong deposit levels further reflect public trust in the state banks."

Knowledgeable spokesmen for Western imperialism recognize that the privatization and especially internationalization of the financial system is a necessary step in breaking the economic power of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime. Earlier this year the London *Economist* (8 March)—a semi-official organ of British and American bankers—wrote:

> "All Chinese banks are, directly or indirectly, state-run, and the government, local or central, interferes both in the appointment of managers and in lending. There is, therefore, no such thing as a market-driven, meritocratic Chinese bank. Without control, foreign investors will find it difficult to create one.
>
> "The Chinese, however, have no intention of yielding control."

As the *Economist*'s plaint indicates, foreign banks have to date been limited to the margins of China's financial system, mainly in the foreign-trade sector. Needless to say, international finance capital has been pushing hard against those limits. For example, earlier this year the Wall Street giant Citibank was allowed to purchase 5 percent of China's ninth-largest commercial bank. A joint credit card operation was then launched geared to China's newly wealthy elite—capitalist entrepreneurs, top party and government officials, affluent petty-bourgeois types (engineers, academics). For Citibank, this is just the opening wedge in its campaign to penetrate ever more deeply into China's financial system. "China is one of the last great frontiers in finance," proclaimed Richard Stanley, head of Citibank's operation in Hong Kong (*Wall Street Journal*, 15 September).

Jiang Zemin and his cohorts recognized that opening China's financial system to foreign banks would likely have disastrous economic consequences, not least crippling the government's ability to finance its own expenditures. Thus the agreement by which China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) two years ago postponed "liberalization" of the financial sector until 2006. Only then is China supposed to allow foreign banks to compete on an equal footing with state banks. But what will actually happen three years hence will not be automatically determined by the schedule stipulated in the WTO agreement. It will be determined by social conflict within China and between China and the forces of capitalist imperialism. In recent months, economic conflicts between especially American imperialism and the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state have come to the fore.

The Battle over the Yuan

China's currency, the yuan (or the renminbi), is not convertible on what bourgeois economists call the capital account of international transactions. Capitalist entrepreneurs in China as well as managers of state-owned enterprises can acquire foreign currency in exchange for yuan (after prior approval from the central bank) only to pay for imports and other trade-related expenses. Foreign currency acquired by mainland Chinese nationals is required to be transferred to the central bank in exchange for yuan.

In recent years, there has predictably been an increasing volume of illegal currency movements in and out of China, mainly by and through Hong Kong financiers. There is no accurate estimate of the magnitude of these illegal monetary flows, but they have not yet reached the point of seriously affecting the Chinese economy or the regime's economic policies.

For a decade or so, China has pegged the yuan to the dollar. Since the dollar depreciated this year against the euro, the Japanese yen and most other currencies, the price of China's manufactured exports fell sharply on the world market. Most experts in the field estimate that if the yuan were freely traded, it would appreciate from 20 to 40 percent against the dollar.

Some big American (as well as European and Japanese) capitalist outfits also benefit from the current undervaluation of the yuan. Over half of Chinese manufactured exports are produced in foreign-owned factories or joint ventures. Dell computer and Motorola are among the top ten exporting companies in China. On the other side of the Pacific, the giant discount retailer Wal-Mart absorbs 10 percent of China's commodity exports to the U.S.

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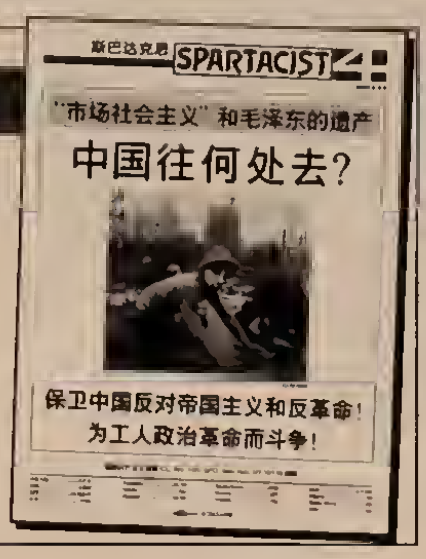


However, the main body of American manufacturing capitalists believe (and not without good cause) that they are being damaged by China's "unfair" trade practices. Last spring Franklin Vargo, vice president of the National Association of Manufacturers, told a Congressional committee: "We must press China to end the manipulation of its currency and allow the yuan-dollar exchange rate to be determined by the market" (*Business Week*, 7 July). A bloc of mainly Democratic and some Republican Senators and Congressmen is pushing legislation to impose additional tariffs on Chinese imports to "offset" the undervaluation of the yuan. Moreover, all of the heavy guns of international finance capital—the heads of the U.S. and European Union central banks, the directors of the International Monetary Fund—have pummeled the Beijing regime to revalue its currency.

But on this issue the Chinese leadership has given no ground. Last month, Chinese president Hu Jintao declared: "Keeping the exchange rate of the renminbi stable serves China's economic performance and conforms to the requirements of the economic development in the Asia Pacific region and the whole world."

As a diplomatic sop to the imperialists, Hu promised to set up a group to "study" making China's currency convertible in the future. How far in the future? The *Far Eastern Economic Review* (29 May), a well-informed journal based in Hong Kong, wrote in this regard: "The renminbi is not freely convertible on the capital account, and most analysts don't expect this to change for some years. The fear is that opening the country's capital account too soon will lead to huge outflows because of a lack of confidence in the banking system."

But even if Beijing policymakers project maintaining the existing exchange rate and international monetary arrangements for some years, they may *not* be able to do so. The capitalist enclave of Hong Kong is an ever-widening breach through which illegal currency transactions flow in both directions. The expropriation of Hong Kong's financiers and other sections of its bourgeoisie is vitally necessary to protect China's economy from the destructive onslaught of the Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo banks.

The Agrarian Question Comes to the Fore, Again

Discussions of China's economy and its supposed "transition to capitalism" in the Western bourgeois media and academia usually focus on industry and finance. However, 700 million of China's 1.3 billion people are still engaged in agriculture. The main social motor force for the 1949 Revolution was a massive peasant uprising against the landlord class, many of whose members received their just deserts at the hands of those whom they had brutally oppressed and exploited. All agricultural land was nationalized.

AFP

Migrant workers gathered at Beijing train station. "Market reforms" have thrown millions into unemployment, poverty.

One of the first economic "reforms" of the Deng regime was the decollectivization of agriculture, with peasant families being given their own small plots on the basis of long-term leases. However, land was not reprivatized and restrictions were imposed on the transfer of leaseholds. Even so, competition among peasant smallholders necessarily resulted in ever-widening economic differentiation in the rural villages. A class of rich farmers emerged who, through semi-legal or illegal arrangements, have been able to exploit the labor of their poorer neighbors. Nonetheless, the basic structure of China's agrarian economy is fundamentally and manifestly different from that of India, for example, where over a hundred million landless agricultural laborers toil on the large estates of wealthy landlords.

However, the current structure of China's agrarian economy cannot long be maintained given its membership in the WTO. State-owned industrial enterprises can to a degree be buffered from increased import competition by additional government financing via the banks. But there is no way that China's peasant smallholders can compete with the capital-intensive, scientifically managed agribusiness of the U.S. and other major food-exporting countries. While the Beijing regime has duly reduced tariffs and quotas on agricultural produce, it has also resorted to ad hoc protectionist devices. Last year, new "safety regulations" were applied to imports of genetically modified grain. This year, shipments of soybeans from the U.S., Brazil and Argentina were halted on the grounds that they were "contaminated" by a fungus (one which, however, is also common to soybeans grown in China).

Nonetheless, the basic line of the regime's agrarian policy is *not* to protect the multitude of peasant smallholders. It is rather to move toward large-scale, de facto *privately owned* farms. Thus a CCP Central Committee plenum held in October adopted a resolution further easing restrictions on the transfer of agricultural land. An American journalist covering the meeting reported: "China is worried about competition in the World Trade Organization from foreign foodstuffs, and the emergence of big farms would increase agricultural efficiency, an agronomist said" (*Washington Post*, 15 October).

However, the resolutions and intentions of the CCP leadership in this regard, as in others, will not automatically and necessarily be translated into economic reality. The 1949 Revolution remains a living memory in the Chinese countryside. Poor peasants know that their grandparents meted out a rough plebeian justice to the brutal landlords and grasping village moneylenders. China's would-be landlords of today could well suffer a similar fate. In fact, over the last decade China has seen many large-scale peasant protests and riots, especially against increased taxation and corruption.

Yet China does have to move from peasant smallholding to modern, large-scale mechanized farming. The question is how. A government based on workers and peasants councils would not only prohibit or restrict the hiring of labor and leasing of additional land by rich farmers but would also promote the recollectivization of agriculture. This does not mean reverting to the agricultural communes of the Mao era, which were basically an aggregate of backward peasant holdings. For the mass of Chinese peasants to give up their own holdings in favor of collective farms, they must be convinced that this will result in a higher standard of living for themselves and their families. Thus a government based on workers and peasants councils would offer reduced taxes and cheaper credits to peasants who joined collectives.

A rational collectivization and modernization of Chinese agriculture would signify a profound transformation of the society. The introduction of modern technology in the countryside—from combines to chemical fertilizers to the whole complex of scientific farming—would require a qualitatively higher industrial base than now exists. In turn, an increase in agricultural productivity would raise the need for a huge expansion of industrial jobs in urban areas to absorb the vast surplus of labor no longer needed in the countryside. Clearly, this would involve a lengthy process, particularly given the limited size and relatively low level of productivity of China's industrial base. Both the tempo and, in the final analysis, the very realizability of this perspective hinge on the aid that China would receive from a socialist Japan or a socialist America, underlining again the need for international proletarian revolution.

The Spectre of a Workers Revolt

In early 2000, a large state-owned molybdenum mine in Yangjiazhangzi—a town in the depressed old industrial region of northeast China—was closed down. A few parts of the mine which were deemed profitable were privatized, mainly taken over by cronies of the incumbent managers. A protest at the enterprise headquarters by the laid-off miners over the paltry severance pay quickly escalated into a full-fledged workers revolt. Some 20,000 miners and their families took to the streets, setting up barricades, burning cars, smashing the windows of government offices and setting oil drums ablaze.

The authorities moved cautiously, for fear the workers might use the stock of dynamite in the mine to defend themselves. For two days, the workers battled the People's Armed Police, a paramilitary force created in the mid 1980s specifically to put down growing social unrest. Finally, army units were brought in, firing live ammunition over the protesters' heads, and quelled the rebellion. Two years later, workers also in northeast China unleashed the country's largest revolt since the 1989 Tiananmen upheaval that marked an incipient political revolution.

In its own way, the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy recognizes that it is sitting atop a volcano of social unrest. Last year, Jiang Zemin declared that "expanding employment and promoting reemployment isn't only a major economic problem, it's also a major political problem." Yet Jiang and his cohorts have failed—and failed miserably—in achieving their own stated policy goal.

Labor minister Zhang Zuoji reported last year that of the 26 million workers laid off from state-owned enterprises since 1998, only 17 million have been re-employed. And the situation in this regard is rapidly deteriorating. According to government statistics, during the first half of 2002 only 9 percent of laid-off workers were re-employed compared to 50 percent in 1998. In many cities in China, workers line the roadsides seeking employment with signs around their necks indicating their job skills: electrician, carpenter, plumber.

The main means by which the Beijing regime has sought to slow the growth of unemployment has been a huge expansion of public works projects internally financed through an ever-higher level of government deficit spending. But in the not-so-distant future, the Beijing Stalinist regime is going to have to make some hard choices. To substantially increase the proportion of social product collected in taxes will entail cutting into the profits and incomes of the capitalist entrepreneurs and also those of the more affluent petty bourgeoisie. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* (10 October 2002), which is far from anti-capitalist in its outlook, observed: "The vibrant private sectors of the coastal economy are notoriously lax at paying taxes." Alternatively, to substantially reduce government expenditure would entail throwing many more millions of workers into the street and cutting their meager social benefits (e.g., pensions). At that point policy differences within the CCP leadership, intersecting growing social tensions, could begin to fracture the bureaucracy.

During the past year, the Jiang regime has been succeeded by a so-called "fourth generation" of CCP leaders represented by Hu Jintao as president and Wen Jiabao as prime minister. Like Deng before him, Jiang has retained ultimate authority by remaining head of the CCP's Central Military Commission, that is, de facto commander of China's armed forces. The ideological stance of the "fourth generation" leaders indicates the conflicting social pressures upon them. On the one hand, they have been more openly pro-capitalist (legitimizing party membership for entrepreneurs, proposing to enshrine "property rights" in the constitution).

At the same time, the new CCP leadership has adopted a more "populist" political style than the gray, technocratic Jiang regime. Thus, shortly before becoming premier, Wen Jiabao went down a coal mine shaft in bitter cold to celebrate the Lunar New Year with the miners working there. More recently, *China Daily*

continued on page 6

AP

Three Gorges dam is example of vast expansion of investment in state-owned infrastructure.

China...

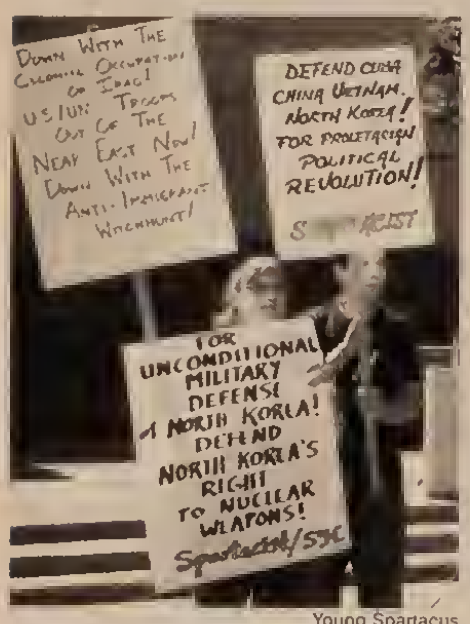
(continued from page 5)

(30 October) trumpeted Wen's personal intervention to help a migrant construction worker collect unpaid back wages, commenting that this "attests to the fact that the new, in-touch-with-people leadership has taken hold when it comes to dealing with the underprivileged in the country."

These "populist" gestures have been accompanied by promises to narrow the gap between rich and poor and between the relatively wealthy coastal provinces and the more impoverished regions of central and western China. If this is not just empty rhetoric but signals differences in the regime over economic policies and priorities, resulting factionalism could open up the political situation. In that event the decisive factors will be the political consciousness of the Chinese working class and other toilers and the ability of revolutionary Marxists (i.e., Leninist-Trotskyists) to intervene to change and elevate that consciousness.

For Workers Democracy!

In East Europe and the former Soviet Union in the 1980s and early '90s, many workers as well as most of the intelligentsia succumbed to the illusion that the introduction of Western-style capitalism would rapidly produce Western-style living standards. But Chinese workers and



Young Spartacus

September 16: Chicago SYC speakout against U.S. occupation of Iraq called for defense of China and other deformed workers states.

the urban poor have already experienced a large dose of Western (and Japanese) capitalism in the form of hundreds of billions of dollars in foreign investment and joint ventures. They've also experienced the growing presence of Chinese capitalist exploiters, both mainland-derived and offshore. And what those experiences amount to is a massive increase in unemployment, economic insecurity, social inequality and income differentials.

All evidence indicates there is deep and widespread popular hostility to those capitalist elements that currently exist in China. A public opinion survey conducted early this year by People's University found that only 5 percent of respondents thought that the newly rich had acquired their wealth by legitimate means. The proposal floated at the CCP's 16th Congress last year to incorporate "property rights" in the constitution has provoked something of a popular backlash. In the past few years, there has been a rash of murders of wealthy tycoons.

If Chinese workers are unlikely to have illusions in Western-style capitalism, the question of Western-style "democracy" is another matter. When the political situation in China opens up, anti-Communist counterrevolutionary groups and parties will doubtless hide their advocacy of "free market" economics while pushing for "democracy," i.e., a parliamentary government elected on the basis of one man, one vote. Typical of such types is Han Dongfang, a pro-imperialist "dissident" who publishes the journal *China Labour Bulletin* in Hong Kong and is a darling of right-wing Congressmen and the anti-Communist AFL-CIO bureaucracy in the U.S.

Parliamentary government is in fact a political form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. In such a system the working class is politically reduced to atomized individuals. The bourgeoisie can effectively manipulate the electorate—in which the vote of a factory worker counts the same as that of a factory manager or technocrat—through its control of the media, the education system and the other institutions shaping public opinion. In all capitalist "democracies," government officials, elected and unelected, are bought and paid for by the banks and large corporations.

As Lenin explained in his classic polemic against social democracy, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (November 1918):

> "Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the 'democracy' of the capitalists and the thousands of *real* limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into *wage-slaves*....
>
> "Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more 'pure' democracy is developed—*drive* the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc.... The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *alien* to them." [emphasis in original]

Under bourgeois democracy, workers merely have the illusion of some control or power over the government. But under a workers state, the question of workers democracy is not one of abstraction or illusion, but at bottom a question of *power*. In a workers state like China, the dictatorship of the proletariat is deformed by Stalinist misrule—the proletariat as a class is deprived of political power, which is instead monopolized by an anti-working-class bureaucratic caste whose policies ultimately threaten the very existence of the workers state. The working class and rural toilers can exercise real political power only through a dictatorship of the proletariat ruled by their *own* class-based governing institutions, the

Peter Turnley

May 1989: Contingent from Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation arriving in Tiananmen Square. Entry of proletariat into mass student protests heralded incipient political revolution.

soviets (the Russian term for councils), which would be open to all parties defending the collectivized foundations of the workers state. In the same work quoted above, Lenin explained:

> "The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which *helps* them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way. And in this it is the vanguard of the working and exploited people, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage of being best united by the large enterprises; it is easier for it than for all others to elect and exercise control over those elected. The Soviet form of organisation automatically *helps* to unite all the working and exploited people around their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc. (these real privileges are the more varied the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation....
>
> "Proletarian democracy is *a million times* more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic." [emphasis in original]

The alternatives facing China are proletarian political revolution or bloody capitalist counterrevolution. It must be noted that under no circumstance will capitalist restoration produce any form of bourgeois democracy. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe offer a glimpse of what capitalism has in store for China's workers—fratricidal warfare, poverty and unemployment, all-around social devastation (see "Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union," *WV* Nos. 809 and 810, 12 and 26 September).

It is no accident that, around the time of Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary coup in 1991, many Yeltsinite "democrats" argued that a "Russian Pinochet" would be needed to administer nascent capitalist rule in the former Soviet Union. Economist Gavriil Popov, a key Yeltsin ally and chief ideologue of the "Democratic Platform" of the Soviet CP, who was elected mayor of Moscow in 1991, frankly acknowledged that the introduction of capitalism would not be compatible with bourgeois democracy:

> "Now we must create a society with a variety of different forms of ownership, including private property; and this will be a society of economic inequality. There will be contradictions between the policies leading to denationalization, privatization, and inequality on the one hand and, on the other, the populist character of the forces that were set in motion in order to achieve those aims. The masses long for fairness and economic equality. And the further the process of transformation goes, the more acute and more glaring will be the gap between those aspirations and economic realities."
>
> —"Dangers for Democracy," *New York Review of Books*, 16 August 1990

Even in the former USSR, which was a global industrial and military power, the capitalist political regimes in the various constituent republics range from semi-bonapartist "parliamentary" rule to outright dictatorship. A capitalist China would subject its masses to even more immense social dislocation and far greater poverty.

Moreover, where the old Russian bourgeoisie was destroyed as a class, the Chinese bourgeoisie was simply driven offshore by the revolution and today remains ready to reclaim its lost holdings and wreak revenge, above all against the combative proletariat. Capitalist restoration could bring with it a revival of the imperialist-sponsored warlordism that marked pre-revolutionary China, leading to the subjugation and dismemberment of the country at the hands of Western and Japanese imperialism while inflicting massive destruction on North Korea and Vietnam.

To achieve soviet democracy in capitalist countries requires a proletarian social revolution that expropriates the bourgeoisie and overturns the capitalist profit system. In contrast, in China it requires a proletarian political revolution to oust the ruling bureaucracy and to place political power in the hands of workers, soldiers and peasants councils. Such a political revolution is premised on the unconditional defense of the collectivized economy which is the social foundation of the workers state. Its program was encapsulated by Trotsky in his classic analysis of Stalin's Russia, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936):

> "It is not a question of substituting one ruling clique for another, but of changing the very methods of administering the economy and guiding the culture of the country. Bureaucratic autocracy must give place to Soviet democracy. A restoration of the right of criticism, and a genuine freedom of elections, are necessary conditions for the further development of the country. This assumes a revival of freedom of Soviet parties, beginning with the party of Bolsheviks, and a resurrection of the trade unions. The bringing of democracy into industry means a radical revision of plans in the interests of the toilers.... 'Bourgeois norms of distribution' will be confined within the limits of strict necessity, and, in step with the growth of social wealth, will give way to socialist equality.... The youth will receive the opportunity to breathe freely, criticize, make mistakes, and grow up. Science and art will be freed of their chains. And, finally, foreign policy will return to the traditions of revolutionary internationalism."

The fight for workers democracy is intimately linked to the struggle for the extension of revolution. Karl Marx once wrote that with scarcity, want is generalized, "and with want the struggle for necessities begins again, and that means that all the old crap must revive." The material basis for bureaucratism lies with scarcity—the bureaucracy deems itself the arbiter of how scarce resources are used and distributed. Historical necessity once again forces the question of revolutionary internationalism. Without a socialist America, a socialist Europe, a socialist Japan, the working people of China will not be able to eliminate scarcity and want. Indeed, the fate of the Chinese proletariat—the fate of working people and the oppressed throughout the world—will be decided in the struggle for international socialist revolution.

The International Communist League is committed to bringing this revolutionary Marxist program—the only program which can defend China against the powerful forces of imperialist-backed counterrevolution—to the workers and rural toilers of China today. ■

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Young Spartacus

Protest Mass Arrests at Miami Anti-FTAA Demos!

As the representatives of American capital sought to deepen imperialist domination over the economies of Latin America at the FTAA summit in Miami the week of November 16, the downtown area was turned into a massive armed police camp meant for some 20,000 anti-FTAA protesters, mostly youth activists and trade unionists. More than 40 law enforcement agencies, from the city police to the FBI to the Department of Fish and Wildlife, carried out a systematic campaign to terrorize and hunt down activists before, during and after the main day of protests on November 20, which was brought to an end when riot police unleashed an arsenal of "non-lethal" weaponry on demonstrators.

Throughout that day, phalanxes of cops in full riot gear with plastic shields and batons, backed up by mounted water cannons and armored personnel carriers, blocked city streets; others were stationed on the rooftops or patrolled the skies in helicopters, identifying activists for assault or arrest. The police held up 87 busloads of union members, preventing them from reaching the AFL-CIO rally on time, and swarmed over smaller anti-FTAA protest actions. Dozens of youth were injured and bloodied in orchestrated police rampages. There were a total of 282 arrests over the period from November 11-22.

There are numerous reports of sexual assaults, including forced sex acts, and beatings of jailed protesters as well as denial of food, water and medical attention and threats of federal detention for refusing to reveal their national origin. Members of Anarchist People of Color (APOC) in custody were among those horribly mistreated.

As part of a nationwide attempt to round up activists and prevent them from reaching Miami, eight people were arrested November 16 on false charges in a vicious police raid with all the markings of a planned provocation at a NY Area APOC fundraising benefit for the Miami FTAA protests. Police pepper-sprayed and indiscriminately beat with nightsticks many of those in attendance.

The naked display of capitalist "law and order" in Miami was observed by law enforcement officials from several cities in anticipation of upcoming large-scale demonstrations. Meanwhile, a recently leaked FBI security bulletin of October 15 reveals "a coordinated, nationwide effort to collect intelligence regarding demonstrations" against the Iraq war and occupation (*New York Times*, 23 November). This intelligence-gathering activity is borrowed from the tradition of COINTELPRO in the 1960s and '70s when the FBI sought to "neutralize"—including through murder—black militant and anti-war groups. Under the pretext of the "war on terror," the Feds and local law enforcement are attempting to criminalize dissent. As one lawyer for the FTAA protesters noted, "The 'criminals' included anyone in the streets of Miami."

We reprint below a letter issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on November 24 in protest of the mass arrests in Miami.

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee vigorously protests the violent police rampage unleashed on anti-FTAA summit protesters in Miami during the week of November 16. More than 230 protesters have been arrested, some on felony charges. Detained protesters are reported as receiving brutal treatment in prison. On November 21, sixty-two people protesting in solidarity with detained protesters were themselves arrested. We demand the immediate release of all detained protesters and that all charges be dropped!

Police used everything from water cannons, concussion grenades, wooden batons, pepper spray and rubber bullets to tasers and tear gas on the crowds of protesters. Over 125 protesters reportedly suffered injuries, as serious as traumatic head injuries, facial lacerations, bone fractures and exposure to chemical irritants. Even people at the Wellness Center, the location where protesters were being treated for their injuries, were attacked by police wielding pepper spray. On November 20, the day of the 20,000-strong permitted march sponsored by the AFL-CIO, police blocked selected protesters from entering the march. Those excluded became the targets of worse police repression. When some AFL-CIO members attempted to open access to the permitted march, police shot rubber bullets at six steelworkers.

For months, Florida police and government tried to intimidate people from protesting the FTAA summit; this effort against the protests is linked with Miami's bid to become the permanent headquarters of the FTAA. The most outrageous example of this intimidation is that the chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court suspended guarantees of speedy trials and hearings in Miami-Dade. Another example is that some protesters were arrested under rarely invoked city ordinances such as "obstruction of free passage on sidewalks." In preparation for the protests, the City Commission passed ordinances banning the possession of "hard items." Such broad language provides police with the pretext to arrest anyone they choose.

AP

Anti-FTAA protester arrested in police sweep outside Miami-Dade County Jail, November 21, at demonstration demanding release of those arrested the day before.

Miami Mayor Manuel Diaz says that the security operation that ended in several arrests and police assaults against protesters "should be a model for homeland defense." In fact, tacked on to the $87 billion federal spending bill for the occupation of Iraq was $8.5 million to beef up security and intelligence specifically for the Miami demonstration. "Homeland defense" and the "war on terror" mean increased domestic intimidation and repression against minorities, political activists and the labor movement.

Again we raise the demands: free the arrested protesters and drop all charges now!■

Goose Creek, South Carolina

Racist Gun-Wielding Cops Terrorize High School Students

WCSC

Video surveillance at Stratford High School captures November 5 police raid.

On November 5, 14 cops stormed Stratford High School with guns drawn and pointed at students, screaming at them to lie down on their stomachs and restraining at least a dozen youths in plastic "flex-cuffs" when they didn't respond quickly enough. As a police dog sniffed and barked at the students, police rifled through their bags and lockers. Many parents were incensed by the raid: "I'm absolutely outraged," said one. "This is supposed to be a free country, not a police state."

The putative reason for this raid was a search for drugs, though the cops came up with none and made no arrests. As this incident proves, the "war on drugs" is a war all right—a war on minorities. Stratford High School is a 22 percent black school, but of the 107 students assaulted in the hallway that day, according to school principal George McCrackin, ***70 percent were black***. Since the mid '80s, the racist "war on drugs" has been the main vehicle for the explosion in the number of black youth ensnared in the criminal injustice system—such that today nearly one in three black men in their twenties is in prison, on probation or on parole.

The police came to the school at the principal's request and launched their commando-style raid when he gave them the signal, after buses from black neighborhoods arrived. In order to encourage police action, McCrackin handed over four days of video surveillance to the cops. The supposed evidence of drug activity: students "suspiciously" standing under the camera as opposed to in front of it where they could be caught on the tape! Though the administration stated that they didn't know guns would be drawn, McCrackin has called the episode "a valuable experience" and sounded just like an American imperial president when proclaiming he would "utilize whatever forces I deem necessary to keep this campus safe and clean."

This raid exemplifies the state repression and terror that is a daily reality for black Americans. Economic contraction means blacks are increasingly deemed a surplus population in capitalist America; the racist ruling class no longer wants to "waste" money on them simply to keep them alive, let alone educated. From budget cuts and overcrowding to entryway metal detectors and armed security guards, today's schools for the poor and working class look much more like prisons.

The future in capitalist America for black youth is more and more a choice of fighting (and dying) "for country" or spending life behind bars. And behind every corner is the cop's nightstick, trying to keep blacks and the working class "in their place." Democrats and Republicans alike motivate, support and enforce such police-state measures to assure that the few filthy rich capitalists can continue to exploit the working class with minimal disruption.

The liberation of black people from daily oppression at the hands of the racist ruling class and their police attack dogs is only possible through a workers revolution that will establish a socialist egalitarian society for the benefit of all. Each racist state atrocity underscores further the crying need for this solution. *Down with the racist "war on drugs"! For black liberation through socialist revolution!*■

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Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

briefly in 1963 and again in 1968. With backing from the U.S., he slaughtered Kurds and other ethnic minorities, Communists and labor leaders, and anyone who challenged his rule. But in this he was no different from any of the other emirs, colonels and sheiks in the region, not to mention the Zionists with their huge nuclear arsenal, who are today turning Palestinian towns into graveyards—all of whom are generously supplied with whatever "weapons of mass destruction" they wish as long as the U.S. determines it's in its interest.

We called for the Iraqi working class to topple Hussein. Today we call for the Iraqi workers to throw out the U.S. colonial government, as well as their native Iraqi ruling class. We call to defend the Palestinians and to build a Hebrew-Arab workers party to smash the Zionist capitalist state. We call for the workers throughout the region to topple their respective butchers and establish a socialist federation of the Near East.

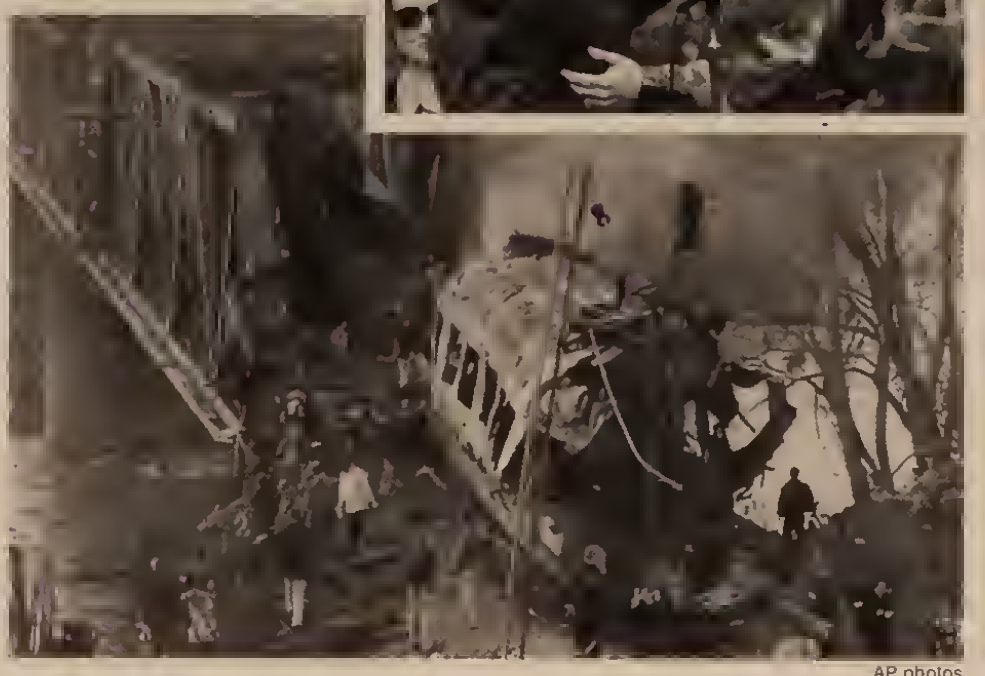
Down With the Colonial Occupation of Iraq!

The occupation imposed in the name of "democracy" has made the Iraqis very nervous as to its real intentions from the start, when they saw that the *only* Iraqi institution the U.S. deemed worth defending against looting was...the Oil Ministry. Forget the priceless antiquities from the dawn of civilization. The Iraqis started fighting, justly, against the occupation of their country and today show no signs of stopping. The Bush administration is obviously having serious problems in maintaining its rule in Iraq and this is a good thing.

Marxists are not bloodthirsty and we do not savor the killings of American working-class youth. These deaths are the direct responsibility of the U.S. ruling class, which is sending them to fight and die for its interests. But we are not pacifists and we don't simply hate the loss of life. We have a side in this conflict—with the Iraqis against the forces of U.S. imperialism. We are for the defeat of U.S. imperialism wherever and whenever possible.

I don't know much about who makes up the resistance to the occupation in Iraq today, but it's a fair bet that the vast majority of them are, to put it mildly, extremely far from our perspective of workers revolution. The fact that we support them militarily against the U.S. doesn't mean we lend them any political support or have any illusions about their aims. Reactionary Islamic fundamentalist forces are making conditions increasingly dangerous and frightening for women in particular. As for the supposedly active Hussein supporters, it's quite possible that some of them are mostly seeking a way to express their opposition to the occupation. An Al Jazeera reporter (26 October) interviewed one such person, an 18-year-old who had been with a group of schoolchildren and young men waving pictures of Hussein at American soldiers. The reporter asked whether he liked the former president. The guy laughed and responded, "Honestly, he was a dog and the son of a dog. But this really irritates the Americans—and that makes me happy."

The combination of an expensive imperialist adventure, dubbed "a mess" by a key capitalist mouthpiece, the *New York Times*, plus economic problems at home and internationally, spells huge trouble for Bush. An October 2 piece in the *Asia Times* summarized the impasse of the Bush administration with this colorful description: "To say that there's blood in the water and the sharks are circling around the Bush administration's Iraq policy would be understatement at this point. It's more like a blood bank that's been dropped into the water, the sharks have taken the first bites, and Amazonian piranhas are clamoring for visas on an expedited basis."



Bill Clinton with Wesley Clark, commander of U.S./NATO forces during Balkans War and current Democratic presidential hopeful, in 1999. Below: Passenger train destroyed by U.S./NATO terror bombing of Serbia.

AP photos

On the one hand, of course, it's gratifying to find these bloodsucking ghouls in trouble. On the other hand, if Bush is going down, someone else is coming up. Who? I'm not going to make any predictions about who will win the election in 2004; things could go either way. But at this point, it does look like sections of the ruling class are shifting over to their *other*, less obviously nutty and vicious party next time around, the Democrats. The morass in Iraq, combined with the economic recession at home, has resulted in a pretty rapid movement to get rid of the Bush administration, which looked unstoppable just a few months ago. Call it the "Dixie Chicks" barometer: at the height of the war there was a hysterical outbreak of patriotic indignation when one of the Dixie Chicks confessed she was embarrassed by Bush. Now CNN reportedly has run a poll asking if you find the Bush administration's leadership an embarrassment.

It's pretty easy to look at the Bush administration as a right-wing cabal of loonies, nuclear cowboys escaped from the reels of *Dr. Strangelove* and intent on ruling the world. What else can you think when the Pentagon official in charge of tracking down Saddam Hussein and the leadership of Al Qaeda, one General William Boykin, was found to be proclaiming that Bush is in the White House because god put him there and the enemy in the war on terrorism is "a guy named Satan"? So yes, you could make a point that the entire Bush administration really just needs to be institutionalized, but although the idea is emotionally satisfying, it doesn't address where the insanity comes from, namely the capitalist system.

Capitalism is an irrational system that breeds such irrational individuals. But unfortunately, the entire capitalist ruling class cannot be simply dismissed as irrational or stupid, or we'd have a much easier time getting rid of them. The U.S. capitalist class has concrete material interests, which are to gain the maximum degree of profits for itself by exploiting working people in this country and internationally. Their profits have to be defended militarily, which requires the use, or the threat of, imperialist troops. As I said earlier, defending these interests means that the capitalists *have to* seize and maintain spheres of influence at the expense of their imperialist rivals.

This is true of the entire American ruling class; they only have differences of opinion about the best way of going about this, which are roughly expressed in the two main capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans. The Democrats are every bit as interested as the Republicans in the U.S. being the dominant imperialist power, but they want to do it a little differently. They want to drop the embarrassing "pre-emptive strike" stuff which is scaring their erstwhile allies to death, and emphasize less "unilateral" imperialism by working through the UN, while doing essentially the same thing.

It would be wrong to say there's simply no difference between the two parties, but as far as the working class and oppressed internationally are concerned, the differences don't amount to much. In fact, because they are historically, and treacherously, supported to the hilt by the leaders of U.S. unions and are therefore seen as friends of labor, the Democrats tend to be *better* at driving down living conditions of the poor, wringing concessions from unions, and ratcheting up state repression. The current occupation in Iraq is brutal, but it was the more "reasonable" Democratic Clinton administration that starved one and a half million Iraqis, mostly children and the elderly, through eight years of UN sanctions and bombed Iraq at intervals.

Anyone who hoped the Democrats would somehow prevent the colonial occupation of Iraq was sorely disappointed. Today, as the occupation runs into trouble and flag-draped coffins come home, the Democrats are hoping to gain support in next year's election by complaining increasingly loudly about "Bush's war." This didn't, however, prevent them from passing the spending bill to support the occupation, lest they appear "unpatriotic."

Fake Socialists Tail Democratic Party

Our message to antiwar youth and workers is that it is impossible to oppose imperialist war without opposing the capitalist system that breeds it and the capitalist parties that carry it out. This very basic truth, however, runs counter to the program of the supposedly "socialist" organizers and main builders of the recent demonstrations or those that took place during the war. These demonstrations were consciously organized and built by supposedly socialist organizations to embrace Democratic Party spokesmen like Al Sharpton, whose participation would supposedly encourage the unity of all opponents of the war. The "socialist" organizations I am referring to are Workers World Party, who leads the group ANSWER; the Maoists of the Revolutionary Communist Party who built the utterly liberal pacifist group Not In Our Name; and the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO).

In politics every program and every action has a *class* character: does it serve the working class and oppressed, or does it serve the capitalists? The antiwar demonstrations were built in opposition to the imperialist war, but they were consciously designed *not* to oppose imperialism as a system; that's what made them "broad." The so-called socialists who lent their assistance to liberal Democrats deliberately *obscured* the fact that war is an inevitable product of capitalism. They conveyed the war as merely a bad policy by a bad group of politicians, the Republicans. They sent the implicit message that a "better" set of politicians, the Democrats, would stop the war.

Today the ISO says: "A UN occupation won't bring democracy or liberation to the people of Iraq any more than the U.S. will" (*Socialist Worker*, 17 October). This is pretty priceless coming from the ISO, who clearly hope no one will compare their words with what they do on the ground. The ISO consistently capitulates to forces that look to the UN, like in the first Persian Gulf War in 1991, when it officially *endorsed* a January 26 "Campaign for Peace" march, one of whose demands was for UN sanctions. We call the UN a "den of imperialist thieves and their victims." Its imperialist members have competing interests, as the Iraq war made clear. Several weeks ago the UN officially endorsed the fait accompli, the American occupation of Iraq. From the inception of the UN, when under its auspices the U.S. devastated the Korean peninsula during the 1950-53 Korean War, to the first Persian Gulf War to today, the UN has served to provide a fig leaf for U.S. imperialism.

Today the ISO is writing articles that denounce the Democrats and argue against supporting them as a "lesser evil." They're doing this in order to support *another* capitalist party, the Greens, as they did in the 2000 presidential elections and in the recall election in California. But the Greens are a capitalist party. In fact, they aren't even an "alternative to the Democrats": Nader has explicitly called for a Democratic majority in Congress, is supporting Democrat Dennis Kucinich for president and is rumored to be considering running only after Kucinich is defeated for the nomination.

The Greens looked to the UN to deal with the "problem" of Iraq's supposed "weapons of mass destruction." The real reason for the Greens' existence is that in a period where you often can't tell the Democrats apart from the Republicans, the Greens want to "remind" the Democrats that they should at least occasionally remember their liberal supporters if they want to win office. The Greens appeal almost exclusively to white, petty-bourgeois liberals; Nader ignored black oppression as a matter of principle during the 2000 presidential election, saying that

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specific demands against racial discrimination were "divisive." And this is who the ISO has supported.

Workers World goes about the same purpose a little differently. The ANSWER "Call to Action" for October 25 denounces "Bush" and "Bush's war" *15* times without once mentioning the Democrats. Is there an agenda here? Some of those around groups like ANSWER say *they* oppose the Democrats, that they're just "using" big name politicians like Sharpton or Jesse Jackson to make the demonstrations bigger, and what's wrong with that? But get real: given the massive political weight of the capitalist Democratic Party versus the nonexistent weight of these so-called socialist groups, who's using whom? Why do such politicians participate? By supporting a wing of the capitalists, the organizers of these demonstrations in fact *bolster* the capitalist system and help to ensure that imperialist war will continue.

In ANSWER's material you'll also, inevitably, find something along the lines of this lament, also taken from the flyer for October 25: "The U.S. is spending almost $4 billion a month to occupy Iraq.... Remember these numbers when the government says there's no money for education and healthcare, or libraries, firehouses, childcare or vital social programs." Their banners always say something like: "Money for Jobs, Education and Healthcare, Not for War!" This presents capitalism, and imperialism, as a system which can be made to stop war and serve the interests of the oppressed; you just need big enough demonstrations to make them serve our interests.

On the other hand, of course, there *were* really big demonstrations around the world last year and this spring, which clearly didn't stop the war and don't look to be stopping the occupation. There was an article in the *Washington Post* just before October 25 in which the organizers were asked about the early days of the occupation when the antiwar left seemed to disappear. Some activists said they and others were demoralized when their efforts failed to stop the war. One New Jersey organizer called it "discouraged peace activists syndrome."

The point is not to be "discouraged," but to draw the lesson of this experience: Nothing will stop the imperialists from pursuing their interests as long as capitalist imperialism exists. Petitions to Congressmen or marches by millions around the world are not going to change this fact. The capitalist class must be removed from power. To do this, we look on the other side of the class line, to the working class, because they have the social power to bring down capitalist rule.

WV Photos

Left: ISO banner at March 15 antiwar rally promotes illusion that capitalism can be reformed to serve interests of workers and oppressed. Right: Al Sharpton speaking at 26 October 2002 antiwar rally. Workers World's ANSWER coalition builds platforms for capitalist politicians, serving to bolster illusions in Democratic Party.

The Proletariat Is the Key

I know I have to defend this assertion because the term "working class" has become increasingly abstract to youth today, who are taught by the concepts of "globalism" and "postmodernism" that this is some quaint Marxist notion. Well, as you hopefully saw in the front-page article in *WV* (No. 814, 21 November), L.A. has been convulsed by strikes for weeks by workers who defied the bosses' attempts to drive down their wages and slash health care benefits. Everyone here must remember the experience in New York around last Christmas, when the front page of every newspaper was filled with growing hysteria about the possibility of a transit strike, which was ultimately knifed by the union tops. A potential strike by longshore workers on the West Coast in the summer of 2002 made the ruling class completely and clearly hysterical about the threat to their profits. Even when such struggles are betrayed by the trade-union bureaucrats, as they generally are, they explode the myth preached by "postmodernists" that the proletariat is obsolete. In fact, they show pretty clearly that workers, or the proletariat, are critical to the functioning of the American and world capitalist system. Clearly the proletariat not only exists, but it can bring the economy of the "world's only superpower" to a halt.

Every capitalist society creates its own gravedigger, the working class. But U.S. capitalism contains within it a particular weakness because it was built on the foundation of black slave labor. Although the Civil War eliminated slavery and the civil rights movement won formal legal equality, blacks remain forcibly segregated on the bottom of U.S. capitalist society, the victims of institutionalized racial oppression. Increasingly over the past few decades, as the U.S. has shut down factory after factory, creating ghost towns where they used to produce steel, whole layers of black people no longer have any prospect of ever having a decent job. The industrial jobs that have been lost have been replaced with prison cells: the prison population of 2.1 million is four times what it was 30 years ago.

Also, blacks are disproportionately represented in the military because it's one of the few ways they see to escape poverty. This points to the historic Achilles' heel of the American military: it's composed disproportionately of young black men who have little cause or inclination to fight, and maybe die, for the interests of a ruling class that treats them with racist contempt at home. And despite deindustrialization, one sector in which blacks are integrated is at the workplace. As was reflected in this war, black people tend to be less inclined than whites to buy the ruling class' hype about "democracy."

Add to the picture increasing numbers of immigrants who have entered the U.S. working class in the past few decades, bringing higher class consciousness and a tradition of fighting against the bosses. Especially after September 11, as the ruling class has escalated its assault against everybody, immigrants have felt the brunt in heightened racism, the threat of deportation and more grinding exploitation as the bosses seek to take advantage of their vulnerability. Some have chosen to fight, however, as we're seeing in the strikes in L.A. This underlines the crucial importance for the labor movement to take up the call: Full citizenship rights for immigrants!

The American labor movement generally fails to mobilize in the interests of all working people not because the unions have become "irrelevant" today, as some teachers of "globalism" say, but because the leadership of the labor movement has a defeatist and treacherous program: they chain the workers to the Democratic Party and that spells defeat. As we wrote two decades ago and have repeated many times:

> "No decisive gain of labor was ever won in a courtroom or by an act of Congress. Everything the workers movement has won of value has been achieved by mobilizing the ranks of labor in hard-fought struggle, on the picket lines, in plant occupations. What counts is power. The strength of the unions lies in their numbers, their militancy, their organization and discipline and their relation to the decisive means of production in modern capitalist society. The bosses are winning because the power of labor, its strength to decisively cripple the enemy, has not been brought to bear."
>
> —"Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win," *WV* supplement (March 1984)

We are fighting to break workers and the oppressed from the Democrats and Republicans, to build a revolutionary workers party that fights for workers revolution, to bring about a socialist world.

WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at January 18 San Francisco antiwar demonstration.

U.S. Imperialism in the Post-Soviet World

Of course, today it's generally believed that workers revolution is impossible, that "communism has failed" and that the only thing to do is to accept that capitalism is forever. In bringing about this change in consciousness throughout the world, the defining experience of the last 15 or so years has been the collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe and the Soviet Union in the late '80s and early '90s. The shape of today's world—including the U.S.'s position on top and Iraq's desperate one—is tied in innumerable ways to the existence and collapse of the Soviet Union in the last century. So I'm going to speak at some length about it, beginning with the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, which dealt a huge blow to world imperialism and remains a powerful example for the world's oppressed today; it continues to prove that imperialism can be brought down by the working class under revolutionary leadership.

The first interimperialist war, World War I, gave birth to the Russian Revolution. The Bolsheviks never viewed themselves as having made the "Russian" Revolution, but as having initiated world socialist revolution. They recognized that for the Russian Revolution to survive, workers revolutions had to triumph in the imperialist countries. This understanding was unfortunately confirmed in the negative. Due to the lack of revolutionary leadership outside of Russia, workers revolutions didn't triumph in West Europe, despite revolutionary opportunities particularly in Germany in 1918-1919 and 1923. The failure of these revolutions ushered in a period of demoralization that set the stage for a political counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, which was led by Stalin in 1923-24. In the context of international defeat and the Soviet Union's isolation, Stalin developed the "theory" in 1924 that socialism could be built in one country. Under this anti-Marxist dogma of "socialism in one country," the Stalinist bureaucracy proceeded to accommodate imperialism and betray the promise of the Bolshevik Revolution. In opposition to Stalinism, Trotsky formed a Left Opposition to defend Bolshevism, the program of revolutionary internationalism—the program we stand on today.

On the one hand, the bureaucracy sought to defend its own privileges against the interests of the working class. Conservative and nationalist in outlook, it sought to conciliate the imperialists and transformed the once-revolutionary Third International into a wretched instrument of the Kremlin's foreign policy. On the other hand, as Trotsky underlined, the bureaucracy derived its privileged position from the expropriation of the bourgeoisie in Russia and the creation of a nationalized, planned economy—which represented the key gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution that remained despite Stalinist misrule. Trotsky termed the Soviet Union a degenerated workers state.

The existence of the Soviet Union as a "superpower" largely shaped the world environment in which U.S. imperialism operated. It allowed peasant-based guerrilla movements in China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam to wrest power and expropriate capitalism, setting up societies qualitatively similar to the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet Union. These revolutions, despite being bureaucratically deformed from the start, were victories for the oppressed internationally as well as a boon to blacks, workers and immigrants here. They also stayed the hand of U.S. imperialism for decades—especially the Vietnamese Revolution, which was a really bruising defeat for the imperialists and which haunts them to this day. Today, a crucial task for leftists and workers internationally is the military defense of these remaining deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution.

We Said: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!"

In 1979, the Soviet Union initiated its most progressive act in decades of Stalinist misrule by intervening into Afghanistan. A left-wing military coup had taken place the previous year. To give a sense of Afghanistan at the time, the life expectancy was 40 years, there was no industry, and the illiteracy rate

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was 90 percent for men, 98 percent for women. Almost all women were imprisoned under the *burka* and sold like animals under the bride price system. The leftist government, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), wanted to institute some reforms to modernize the country and improve these hideous conditions. When they tried to limit the bride price—the buying and selling of women—the woman-hating, Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin*, backed by the CIA, took up arms against the government, and the PDPA asked the Soviet Union for help.

The Soviet Union intervened, not so much out of concern for women as out of the justified concern that it didn't want a CIA-backed, reactionary government on its border. It could hardly have been clearer that there was a side to take with the Soviet Union and the PDPA's goals for social progress against the CIA and the Islamic *mujahedin* who wanted to keep Afghan women enslaved. So we did take a side and said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" On the mullahs' side, Democratic president Jimmy Carter oozed hypocritical concern about "human rights" while funding the Islamic cutthroats, screaming about Soviet "expansionism" and launching Cold War II.

The imperialists' anti-Communist "human rights" crusade was joined, disgracefully, by almost every other leftist organization in this country. There was a consensus originating from the ruling class and including everyone from anarchists to feminists. Groups like the Revolutionary Communist Party and Progressive Labor denounced what they called "Soviet social-imperialism," while the ISO embraced the *mujahedin* as "freedom fighters," screaming "Troops Out of Afghanistan!" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 12 January 1980.) Reagan and Bush funded Cold War II in Afghanistan to the tune of billions of dollars and organized the CIA to help recruit more than 70,000 of these vile Islamic fundamentalists from more than 50 countries and including Osama bin Laden, to be trained by the CIA at "*jihad* universities" to fight the "godless Soviets."

Gorbachev began pulling Soviet troops out of Afghanistan in 1988 hoping to appease the imperialists, who gloated over their victory. The ISO, along with most of the "left," gloated with them, saying, "We welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in Eastern Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin's heirs" (*Socialist Worker* [U.S.], May 1988). It did "give heart" to the forces for counterrevolution—in East Germany, East Europe and the Soviet Union in 1991—which the ISO and many other fake socialists cheered.

On *our* side of the class line, the side of the oppressed, we called the withdrawal of Soviet troops a betrayal and said that it would lead to horrors for the women of Afghanistan at the hands of the Islamic fundamentalists. We fought against this taking place with the small forces available to us. In 1989, after Gorbachev had withdrawn all Soviet troops, we offered to the Afghan government to organize an international brigade to fight the Islamic reactionaries, as Trotskyists organized to fight the fascists in the Spanish Civil War. The government rejected the proposal but asked for money, so we organized an international fund drive, raising $44,000 for the people of Jalalabad, under siege by the *mujahedin*.

When it was clear capitalist counterrevolution was rearing its head in the Soviet Union and East Europe, we threw all our available resources internationally into the fight. We were a tiny organization, as we are today, but the imperialists had thrown down the gauntlet. They were intent on having these countries back in the capitalist camp for them to bleed to death, and we didn't hesitate to join the battle and try to show the working class how history could be changed in its favor. Counterrevolution was not a foregone conclusion. Especially in East Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, there was a real possibility the East German working class would fight for power in a political revolution against the Stalinists and to defeat the capitalist counterrevolution. When it became clear that Trotskyists might again be able to do political work in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, we sent comrades to Moscow. We did what we could to mobilize the proletariat to defeat the counterrevolution led by Yeltsin and Bush. In both places, as well as throughout East Europe, the forces of counterrevolution were too strong, and capitalism was restored, but we did not give up these historic battles without a fight.

Today as well, we do not accept that defeat at the hands of imperialism is inevitable. We fight to defend every gain the working class has won. So we defend the remaining deformed workers states in China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam.

UPI

Reuters

Left: Afghan *mujahedin* reactionaries with paymaster Ronald Reagan in the White House, 1983. Right: Members of Afghan women's militia with Soviet-supplied rifles in struggle against CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries.

We resolutely defend North Korea's right to nuclear weapons to defend themselves against the nuclear madmen in Washington. And actually, the fact that North Korea has nuclear capacity makes it much less likely that the U.S. will attack it: it's not defenseless like Iraq. While we defend it militarily, we know that the North Korean workers state is bureaucratically deformed by Stalinist misrule, as are the workers states in Cuba, China and Vietnam. So we fight for workers political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy to bring an internationalist, authentic communist leadership to power. Our defense of these countries is not conditioned, however, on political revolution taking place.

For Socialist Revolution to End Imperialist War!

We're proud to have fought the imperialists in their efforts to retake the globe. There's no "end of history," as one Reaganite ideologue gloated after the fall of the Soviet Union. He meant that supposedly now there are no contradictions, and capitalism, and particularly the U.S., will rule forever. We know that the contradictions in capitalist society will inevitably lead not only to new wars and miseries for the oppressed, but also opportunities and, occasionally, victories. But having taken a side and fought, we also have to recognize that the world's working class and oppressed lost an important battle in the period I've just described. Recognizing this fact is necessary if we're going to lead the working class and oppressed to gain enough strength and confidence in the years ahead to reverse the tide.

So let me explain what I mean about how this defeat has shaped today's world. Right after the fall of the Soviet Union, we were all told that now there would be a "peace dividend"—finally, there would be money for health care and public housing and education since supposedly there was nobody left to fight. What a bitter joke! We told the truth at the time: that the fact that the U.S. was now the undisputed "top cop of the world" made the world a vastly more dangerous place, not less, and that the working class and oppressed everywhere would feel the lash of *more* brutal, naked capitalism. The first Persian Gulf War in 1991, which occurred just months before Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary coup in the Soviet Union, unfortunately proved that we were right about renewed imperialist war. In the next decade or so after the fall of the USSR, the U.S. militarily intervened in Somalia, the Balkans, Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq, while stepping up their attacks on working people at home. So much for the "peace dividend." The children of the former Soviet Union, the world's first workers state, now experience malnutrition as a norm. Today, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there are an estimated 27 million *slaves* in the world—not horribly oppressed wage slaves or peasants, but people who have literally been enslaved. All this is the result of the victory of "freedom and democracy," which we uniquely fought.

The Maoists often say "the most oppressed are the most revolutionary." By that token, the increasingly brutal oppression of most of the world's population should make the workers and oppressed increasingly revolutionary today. It's true that the more the U.S. imperialists savagely attack the world's oppressed, the more they exacerbate the contradictions that inherently exist within capitalism, creating the social tinder that can and must bring them down. But it's not automatic: we can't just sit and wait for it to happen. It takes human beings fighting for the interests of the oppressed to give the just outrage that exists the consciousness and political leadership it needs to succeed.

I'm going to address one way in which consciousness has changed, specifically, thrown back, since the so-called "death of communism," this time closer to the terrain of the U.S. I'll read a small quote which I think expresses it. We got an e-mail building for an anti-globalization protest against the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) in Miami on November 17 to 21. I have no idea who the writer is, but I want to quote him because I think it's pretty typical of how youth think today: "There is a new left on the rise, a left that seeks to change the world without taking power, a left that is almost invisible to the gaze of the corporate media and that has been pushed to the periphery of events such as the World Social Forum: the autonomous left."

"Change the world without taking power"? But taking power is exactly what's necessary! My point is: it's not an accident that this somewhat mystical conception of changing society is popular among today's generation of youth, while it wasn't a current among leftists of your parents' or grandparents' generation. Why? They saw firsthand social revolutions that "shook the world," while you've been taught that communism is an "experiment that failed" and nothing can stop U.S. imperialism, so you might as well try to find ways to tame the beast.

In fact, while it's not possible to "tame" U.S. imperialism, it is possible to destroy it. Today we're facing a U.S. imperialism more powerful than ever, and it is a frightening thing: the only ruling class to have used nuclear weapons against people openly muses about the possibilities of using "limited" nuclear arms. They're rounding up immigrants, setting up domestic spying programs, shredding the Constitution and laying out plans for what they call "war without end." There's plenty of reason for people all over the world, including within this country, to fear the U.S. But the commonly held belief that U.S. imperialism is omnipotent and eternal not only serves the interests of the ruling class, but it's just *wrong*.

This irrational, bloody capitalist system sowed the seeds of its own destruction long ago in the powerful, integrated working class whose position gives them the power to bring the warmongers down. Every day imperialism creates new contradictions, new antagonisms, new challenges to the very existence of imperialism: they can't "end history" in their favor, much as they wish to. It's our job to bring to a close the capitalist chapter and start writing a new one in which those who labor will rule, and the barbarity of war will be a distant memory. We're fighting to build the revolutionary party that leads the way in bringing that about. We are the party of the Russian Revolution. I urge you to join us in fighting for new Octobers. ■

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299 Broadway, Suite 318

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Archives...

(continued from page 3)

workers state in 1991-92, our Prometheus Research Library published the first Russian-language edition of Trotsky's book and distributed it across the former USSR, under the title *The Communist International After Lenin* (1994), to re-introduce to the workers of the former USSR the long-suppressed program of proletarian internationalism smuggled out of Moscow by James P. Cannon in 1928.

The Fortress of the World Revolution

Militant, 15 November 1928

Eleven years have gone by since the Russian workers took the hammer of revolution in their hands and broke the chain of World Imperialism at its weakest link. The history of the whole intervening period represents on the one hand the efforts of the imperialists to forge that chain together again and bind it tighter around the enslaved masses and, on the other hand, the struggle of the proletariat to tear it apart from the whole of humanity.

The Russian Revolution was not merely a national event—it was the beginning of and signal for the International Proletarian Revolution. Herein lies its true meaning, its great historic significance. From this standpoint the revolutionary workers of the world hail the cause of Soviet Russia as their cause on the eleventh anniversary of her "October."

The Russian Revolution broke forever the "unity" of the world and divided it into two hostile camps—the camp of imperialist exploitation and the camp of social revolution. At one polar extreme stands America, the strongest imperialist world power. At the other stands the USSR, the land of the workers rule. The antagonism between them and the systems they represent is irreconcilable. They cannot live together permanently side by side. The victory of the Soviet system on a world scale means the liberation of enslaved humanity and its ascent to heights of culture and achievement beyond our dreams—to socialism and beyond that to communism. The victory of imperialism would hurl civilization into the abyss. Such is the issue of "the epoch of wars and revolutions" in which we live and fight.

The Russian Revolution revivified the revolutionary movement of the world and inspired the proletarian masses with new confidence and hope. It lifted up the banner of socialism, trampled in the mud of social-patriotism by the traitor leaders of the "socialist" parties, and made it again synonymous with Internationalism. Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution, was also the leader of the Communist International which arose out of the ruins brought about by social treason in the war. Eleven years of the dictatorship of the proletariat has confirmed everything that Lenin taught about the international significance of the revolution and the indissoluble bonds between it and the world proletariat.

Soviet Russia is the fortress of the World Revolution. While it stands the imperialist system shakes on its foundations. Every attempt at "stabilization" brings greater insecurity and deeper contradictions. The example and the brotherly help of Soviet Russia inspires and strengthens the movement of the workers and oppressed peoples throughout the world. The flag of our Socialist Fatherland is the flag of our hope and on this eleventh anniversary we again hail it as our own.

Between the Soviet Republics united in the USSR and the international revolutionary proletariat there is an organic connection. They are bound together spiritually and politically. They are united by ties of mutual solidarity which no power on earth can break. Just as the Soviet Republics constitute an impregnable fortress of the world revolution so is the international proletariat the protector of the Soviet Republics. The revolutionary workers see in every blow aimed at Soviet Russia a blow aimed at their own cause and react against it as such. The defense of the Soviet Union is our own fight. It is and will be a central rallying slogan of the labor militants of the entire world. "Defend the Soviet Union!" is a slogan leading the workers to follow the example of the Russian Revolution. So they must conceive it. So will the victory of socialism in Russia and throughout the world be finally secured.

Basil Blackwell Inc

Left Oppositionists in Siberian exile demonstrate on the anniversary of Bolshevik Revolution, 1928. Banner slogans are "Turn the Fire to the Right, Against Kulak, NEPman and Bureaucrat, Not in Words But in Deeds" and "Long Live the Dictatorship of the Proletariat!"

The victory of the Russian proletariat grew out of the World War. The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and the organization of the Communist International—two vast achievements historically linked together—are the plus signs against the slaughter of the millions and the collapse of the Second International. The imperialist war makers and their "socialist" lackeys unleashed forces which they could not control.

The imperialist masters of the world want to take back these gains of the workers wrested out of the bloody pit of war and revolution. Armaments are being multiplied on an unprecedented scale. War clouds darken the skies. War plans grow apace. They are aimed primarily at Soviet Russia and through it at the entire international labor movement.

The celebrations of the workers throughout the world on this eleventh anniversary of the Russian Revolution must therefore be dominated above all by the solemn realization of the war danger and the steel resolve to meet it by revolutionary means; by the resolve to put all our weight and all our sacrifice in the scale for the cause of Soviet Russia which is the cause of the oppressed and exploited.■

Chicago...

(continued from page 2)

company's increased power to impose discipline. Even more ominously, the new contract includes several provisions that threaten the future of the union. The number of part-time drivers, who are "on call" six days a week and receive limited benefits, would increase from 20 percent to 25 percent of the workforce. Workers hired after September 2001 would have their medical benefits slashed upon retirement and would no longer be eligible to retire with full pension after age 55. The company is betting that as years pass, these "new hires" will not want to fight to keep retiree medical benefits that they themselves will not receive.

The Excel "training" program, which the arbitrator agreement will impose on Local 241 as well as 308, creates wage differentials and undermines seniority for workers doing repairs; two repairmen, working side by side on the same job, can be paid at different rates and are eligible for different job picks. What's needed is a fight for: ***Equal benefits and equal pay at the highest rate for equal work! Full-time work for all! End split shifts! Shorter work shifts with no loss in pay!***

For four years, the CTA has frozen the wages of Local 241 members at 1999 levels. Angry members demanded strike action at repeated raucous union meetings. Official and unofficial demonstrations demanded a contract. For two years, ATU 241 officials pursued various court suits, hoping to "force" the company to negotiate. When in February 2003 former president Lee Robinson made a backroom deal with CTA chief Frank Kruesi, it was voted down the next month by 88 percent of the members. But Executive Board members opposed to Robinson's sellout themselves ran to the bosses' courts against the union in an attempt to get an injunction to prevent the membership from voting! The ATU International then moved in to put the local into temporary receivership and organized the March contract vote.

The Executive Board's invitation of the capitalist courts into the union is nothing short of treachery. Far from being a neutral body, the courts, together with the military, cops and prisons, are the core of the bourgeois state, an apparatus of repression whose function is to maintain the system of capitalist class rule and property. The bosses' courts intervene to weaken and even destroy unions and take matters out of the hands of the union members. Labor must clean its own house! Government hands off the unions!

Democratic Party—Enemy of Labor

The labor bureaucrats push the defeatist lie that you can't strike against City Hall. ATU Local 1277 transit workers in Los Angeles did just that, shutting down public transportation for five weeks. But the sellout of the L.A. transit strike by bureaucrats taking their cue from Democratic Party politicians also underlined the need for the complete independence of the unions from the bosses, their state and their political parties.

This is a key lesson for Chicago ATU members, some of whom have become so discouraged by the machinations of the union bureaucracy that they have turned to bourgeois politicians for aid. One group of workers distributed a leaflet declaring that it was time to "do for ourselves" and calling on members to attend an Operation PUSH meeting to ask Jesse Jackson, Sr. for help. Not one to pass up such an opportunity, Jackson demanded $35 a head in PUSH membership fees from distressed transit workers. PUSH and Jackson sponsored a series of rallies outside CTA facilities and headquarters at the Merchandise Mart calling for a contract.

Jackson represents the Democrats and the Democrats, no less than the Republicans, represent the capitalists. The party of Jackson is the party of Daley is the party of Kruesi. Jackson postures as a "friend of labor" in order to head off and contain social struggle. His role is to rope in working people, particularly black people, to vote for whatever racist, anti-labor candidate the Democrats run. What this Democratic "lesser evil" meant under Clinton was the axing of welfare, a sharp rise in the disparity between rich and poor and a massive increase in the black and Hispanic prison population.

Unlike Jackson, who is a direct representative of the capitalists, the union bureaucracy are the political agents of the ruling class *within* the workers movement, seeking to divert labor struggle into bourgeois electoral politics. On October 1, the ATU International endorsed Richard Gephardt in the Democratic Party presidential primaries. The full-color photo of Gephardt on the International's Web site is in stark contrast to their paltry support for the ATU Local 1277 strike in Los Angeles.

Much more than a struggle over wages is at stake. The CTA is the Chicago employer that provides one of the largest number of decent-paying jobs to black people. The transit unions are a reservoir of potential power in defense of blacks, Latinos and immigrants against police terror. In response to Kruesi's recent fare hike, the transit unions must fight for free, quality mass transit for all and for the restoration of transit service cut by the CTA to swaths of the West Side and South Side ghettos and barrios. In championing the cause of the oppressed, the unions will find a wide base of support.

Over the past year and a half, three bus drivers have been victimized by the cops: Arlene Russell, Karen Kelly and Henry Walker. It was thanks to the union's mobilization that charges against Russell were dropped. The racist cops who arrested Russell held her for eight hours while they ran her fingerprints against an international "terrorist" database—a chilling example of how the repressive measures adopted in the post-September 11 "war on terror" target workers and minorities. Yet the ATU tops *endorsed* the Patriot Act.

The behavior of the trade-union bureaucrats—endlessly flexible in their dealings with the bosses, remote from and dictatorial toward the union members—is in no way a phenomenon particular to this union struggle or even the U.S. labor movement. The union misleaders' strategy of derailing strikes in order to rely on arbitration, the courts or labor boards is directly contrary to the interests of the ranks. Thus this slavish strategy requires that they suppress union democracy. In a 1940 article titled "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky pointed out that the capitalist system, in its epoch of imperialist decay, increasingly requires the subordination of the trade unions to the bosses' state. Driven, on the one hand, by the need to wage war to increase the capitalist rulers' power and profits and, on the other, by its increasing inability to provide its subjects with the wherewithal to survive, the imperialist state seeks to bring the unions under its control. In this country, that subordination is effected, for the most part, by the links and overlap of the trade-union tops with the Democratic Party.

Independence from the capitalist state requires independence from the capitalist parties. The working class needs a socialist revolution and a workers government to get rid of this profit system that robs the workers and poor, maintains segregation and launches imperialist wars. To that end, there must be a fight for a workers party committed to such a program. Building that party will require a struggle in the unions against the misleaders who tie the workers to the Democrats, a fight in the labor movement for a leadership committed to a program of class struggle, a fight to oust the trade-union bureaucrats whose loyalty to capitalism means selling out the workers' cause.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Teamsters Honor Grocery Workers Pickets

Victory to UFCW Strike!

Shut Down the Distribution Centers! Stop the Scabs!

LOS ANGELES, December 2—In a crucial development for the Southern California grocery workers strike, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) picket lines went up the Monday before Thanksgiving at nine distribution centers in Southern and Central California that supply some 859 Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons supermarkets. More than 8,000 Teamsters drivers and warehouse workers are honoring the UFCW pickets, disrupting food deliveries during the busiest grocery shopping season of the year. At a Vons distribution center in El Monte, Teamsters drivers walking away from their trucks were greeted by striking grocery workers saying "Glad that you're back with us!"

As we've said from the beginning of the strike over seven weeks ago, the key to victory for the grocery workers is to shut all the distribution centers down tight. All three grocery chains were forced to take the unusual measure of closing their stores on Thanksgiving Day. Picketing the distribution centers should not be just a temporary pressure tactic for the holidays: nothing should move until the UFCW strike ends in victory. But while the UFCW bureaucracy claims that the distribution system has been "effectively shut down" (*UFCW Daily Update*, 26 November), thousands of scabs are freely driving trucks in and out of the distribution centers and working inside. The Teamsters, while honoring the picket lines, have not been mobilized by their leadership to join the lines. The Teamsters have a big stake in this battle, with their contract expiring in two years, and facing the threat of being replaced by non-union, "independent" truckers. What's necessary is to mobilize mass, militant UFCW and Teamsters pickets at the distribution centers to *stop all scabbing!*

The question of tactics to win this strike poses the broader question of a ***class-struggle strategy*** based on unconditional independence of the unions from the employers, their state and their political parties. This is directly counterposed to the class-collaborationist policy of the labor bureaucracy. The labor tops' support to and reliance on the Democratic Party is an expression of their allegiance to the capitalist system. How such policies lead to sellout and defeat was clearly demonstrated during the recent strike by some 2,000 L.A. transit workers in the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) against the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). It was the alliance between ATU head Neil Silver and Democratic City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa that set the stage for the sellout deal. Villaraigosa used his image as a "friend of labor" to sell the union a rotten deal, something Zev Yaroslavsky, chairman of the MTA Board, could not easily get away with.

Although the majority of the ATU membership voted for the new contract on November 19, which mandates that the future of their union health benefits be left in the hands of a pro-company "mediation" committee, it was largely because they saw no real alternative. Many at the meeting were so disgusted they did not vote at all.

Ferazzi/L.A. Times

UFCW pickets at Vons distribution center in El Monte, November 24. UFCW, Teamsters: Build mass pickets to shut distribution centers down!

Workers leaving the November 19 meeting angrily described how Villaraigosa was strutting around the meeting glad-handing members after having knifed them in the back. Ken Lewis, a veteran mechanic, lashed out at ATU head Silver, saying, "We didn't strike for wages, Neil, we were on strike for benefits!" Health care, he said, was "the most important thing...and we don't have benefits. Why did you cave?" (*Los Angeles Times*, 20 November). It could take months for an agreement to be made on the health benefits issue, and the ranks won't even be allowed to vote on it themselves—the ATU executive board will decide for them.

The L.A. transit showdown is far from settled. After five weeks honoring the ATU picket lines, bus and train drivers in the United Transportation Union (UTU) and the clerks and custodians in the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU) are still working without a contract. An important opportunity to forge unity in struggle was squandered by the bureaucrats; the TCU and UTU should have officially declared themselves on strike and no one should have gone back to work without decent contracts for all MTA workers.

The UTU and the TCU should now both go out on strike with ATU members solidly honoring and joining their picket lines, sending a message that they won't accept any givebacks in health benefits! No one should go back to work until *all* MTA transit workers have a contract that protects health care. No contract, no work! Transit workers need a common contract expiration date and, beyond that, one union for the entire industry.

Workers across the country have a stake in the victory of the Southern California labor struggles. Many workers have demonstrated in solidarity with the multiethnic grocery strikers. On November 10 in San Pedro, thousands of longshoremen effectively shut down the port for eight hours to join a grocery workers rally, along with Teamsters, health care workers, government workers and teachers (see letter, page 2). This was widely appreciated by UFCW strikers; one striker at the Compton distribution center told a *Workers Vanguard* salesman, "We need longshore to go out and shut down the harbor."

The supermarket owners are playing hardball because they're determined to force health care, pension, and two-tier wage take-backs into their Southern California contract as a first step toward slashing wages and benefits around the country as other UFCW contracts come up. Thousands of other UFCW workers in Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio are on strike, and thousands more are working without a contract in Arizona and Indiana. The strike must be extended within California and against the struck supermarket chains nationally. Instead, the union leadership has been sending striking workers to Safeway stores in Northern California, Washington, Baltimore and Denver to put up "informational pickets." Fellow UFCW members are working behind these "pickets," illustrating that such tactics undermine workers' consciousness that the picket line is the battle line in the class struggle.

In an article titled "2 Sides Seem Entrenched In Supermarket Dispute," the *New York Times* (10 November) noted that the 70,000-strong UFCW strike is "the biggest labor dispute in the nation in recent years." It takes place in the context of growing discontent over the colonial occupation of Iraq, the erosion of civil liberties, especially for immigrants, and increasing economic dislocation in the midst of a jobless economic "recovery." "The stakes are enormous.... If the employers succeed in their effort to extract large concessions,...other employers across the nation will see this as a green light to try to do the same thing," Ruth Milkman, chairwoman of the University of California Institute for Labor and Employment, told the *New York Times*.

The capitalists know, as every worker should know, that the interests of the workers and the bosses are diametrically opposed. For profits to go up, the capitalist must increase the rate of exploitation, driving down the living standards of the working masses. The trade-union bureaucrats promote the illusion that there can be "fair" terms of exploitation and the lie that the interests of labor and capital can be reconciled.

While some Democrats have paid lip service to the plight of the downtrodden, heavily immigrant supermarket workers, the Democratic Party no less than the Republicans is a political representative of the employers and an enemy of working people. The aim of the capitalist government, whether in its Democratic or Republican face, is to use its arsenal of repression to suppress labor struggle. Today, picket lines at distribution centers are being constantly videotaped by company security and harassed by the cops.

Labor militants must link the fight to oust the sellout union bureaucrats with the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party. To put an end to union-busting, mass unemployment, racist attacks on black people and immigrants and the imperialist brutalization of the neocolonial masses abroad requires a socialist revolution to overthrow the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. The same ruling class that is slaughtering Iraqis in the Near East is also bent on destroying the hard-won gains of working people and minorities in America. Only when the capitalist exploiters are expropriated and those who labor rule will the wealth of this society be used for the benefit of all. *Victory to the UFCW strike!* ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 816

26 December 2003

For Workers Rule Throughout the Americas!

Defend the Gains of the Cuban Revolution!

Ahmed Velazquez photos

June 12: Over a million demonstrated in Havana against European Union support to U.S. anti-Communist "human rights" campaign against Cuba. Banner in defense of "Miami Five" reads: "Free the Five Heroic Prisoners of the Yankee Empire."

For Workers Political Revolution to Oust Stalinist Bureaucracy!

We print below, edited for publication, a presentation by Spartacist League spokesman Paul Collins given at an SL forum in New York City on September 25.

We are the Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). We are Trotskyists. Leon Trotsky was the co-leader with Lenin of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, the only successful workers revolution in history. Our program is revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist. We think it is necessary to forge Trotskyist parties in every country on the planet to work to transform the consciousness of the working class to a realization that those who labor must rule, that the capitalist system is overripe for removal from the face of the planet and that the failure to do so can only result in barbarism, most likely through a third, nuclear, world war. The capitalist system of exploitation must be replaced with working-class rule, which can lay the foundation for a world of socialist plenty and egalitarianism.

Tonight's talk is on Cuba. We call Cuba a deformed workers state. That is, a society in which capitalism has been overthrown and workers property forms established: nationalized means of production, collectivized property, central planning and state monopoly of foreign trade. But Cuba is a society run by an anti-working-class, petty-bourgeois nationalist, Stalinist bureaucratic caste which rules under the program of "socialism in one country," which means renouncing the struggle for international socialist revolution. We are for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban Revolution against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. The Bush administration has provocatively used the U.S. military base at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba to imprison captives from the U.S. war on Afghanistan. This is an obscenity—we say: U.S. out of Guantánamo Bay!

What do we mean by unconditional military defense? Despite the rule of the parasitic Stalinist caste, we defend the Cuban deformed workers state against capitalist attack. A good analogy is to a trade union, a workers organization which, despite its treacherous pro-capitalist leadership, we defend against capitalist attack. Further, as a necessary part of our defense of the Cuban Revolution, we are for the completion and extension of that revolution internationally. For that you need a Trotskyist party to bring the consciousness of those tasks to the Cuban proletariat and to lead the necessary political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and institute workers democracy, i.e., the direct rule of the working class in workers councils (soviets).

We in the Spartacist League value our revolutionary continuity, standing on the program of revolutionary Leninism and Trotskyism going back to Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, the first four Congresses of the Third (Communist) International, the fight of Trotsky's Left Opposition against the rise of Stalin's bureaucratic caste in the USSR and the struggle for a Trotskyist Fourth International, the U.S. party of which was the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). And the Cuban question looms large in our continuity. In the aftermath of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, our forebears in the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) in the SWP fought the SWP's degeneration and abandonment of revolutionary Trotskyism. The RT challenged the SWP leadership's analysis that Cuba was a healthy workers state and that the Castro leadership were "unconscious Trotskyists."

As we stated in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 8, "Cuba and Marxist Theory":

> "In opposing the SWP Majority's revisionism, our original tendency came into existence and fought for three main programmatic points in orienting to the Cuban revolution and its defense: insistence on the Permanent Revolution, i.e. the view that no essential task of the revolution could be achieved short of the victory and consolidation of a workers state; and, correspondingly, insistence on the struggle for hegemony of the working class in the revolution; together with the necessity for a conscious Trotskyist party as the proletarian vanguard to lead that struggle."

For those of you who are not familiar with it, the theory of permanent revolution holds that in the backward and impoverished countries, even the resolution of basic democratic questions like land redistribution requires a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the bloody bourgeoisies, which act as junior partners to the

continued on page 8

WV Photo

5 May 2000: Spartacist contingent raises call for workers political revolution in Cuba at NYC demonstration in defense of Puerto Rican activists.

U.S. Out of Guantánamo!

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On the WCPI and Abortion

Toronto
25 November 2003

Dear comrades:

In "For Workers Revolution in Iran!" (*WV* No. 807, 1 August), the article polemicizes against the Worker-Communist Party of Iran (WCPI) as follows: "The WCPI accommodates prevalent social conservatism; while, for example, saying that the decision to have an abortion rests with women alone, the WCPI nevertheless calls for state counseling to dissuade women from the procedure." This significantly understates this group's retrograde position on abortion.

WV correctly notes that the WCPI is unique on the Iranian left in its emphasis on women's rights, including forthright opposition to the Islamic veil. But leftists who start reading the section titled "Abortion" in the WCPI's basic programmatic statement, "A Better World," could be excused for thinking they had opened a "right to life" tract by mistake. Here is how the section begins:

> "Few phenomena like abortion, i.e. the deliberate elimination of the human embryo because of cultural and economic pressures, display the inherent contempt for human life in the present system and the incompatibility of existing class society and exploitative relations with human life and well-being. Abortion is a testimony to the self-alienation of people and their vulnerability in the face of the deprivations and hardships that the existing class society imposes on them. ***The worker-communist party is against the act of abortion.***" [emphasis added]

Only after all this does the WCPI acknowledge that "adverse social circumstances do drive a large number of women to resorting to backstreet abortions," grudgingly conceding that abortion should be legalized "up to the twelfth week of pregnancy," and in fact that it should be free until that point. Any later than this, abortion would only be legal "if there is danger to the health of the mother" as "ascertained by the competent medical authorities."

Worker-Communist Party of Iran

Tehran, March 8: Demonstrators defy Islamic regime by openly celebrating International Women's Day.

The call for state counseling before undergoing an abortion, to which the *WV* article referred, reads: "The decision whether to have or not to have an abortion rests with the woman alone. The state has the duty, however, to inform her before her final decision, of the dissuasive arguments and recommendations of the scientific authorities and social counsellors as well as of the financial, material and moral commitments of the state to her and her child."

As the *WV* article explains, the fight for women's liberation against religious bigotry and all-sided, imperialist-enforced social backwardness will be a central motor force for socialist revolution in Iran. The fight for free abortion on demand, like opposition to the veil, is integral to this struggle to free women from centuries of enslavement. The WCPI is generally very critical of religious obscurantism. But their stand on abortion—treating it as a repugnant, immoral act rather than a medical procedure that a woman might need—shows they are firmly wedded to bourgeois morality. Like their declared willingness to open a "dialogue" with the U.S.-backed supporters of the blood-soaked former Shah, like their call for UN imperialist troops to be sent to Iraq, the WCPI's stance "against the act of abortion" shows how they are an obstacle to the fight for a revolutionary vanguard party that can lead the struggle to sweep away Iran's theocratic rulers through a socialist revolution.

Comradely,
John Masters

Free All Class-War Prisoners!

TROTSKY

LENIN

As long as the system of capitalist exploitation remains, those who fight against it will be subject to persecution and imprisonment by the ruling class. Following the Russian October Revolution of 1917, which inspired workers around the world, the American rulers launched a vicious anti-Communist campaign of arrests and deportations. James P. Cannon, a Communist Party leader who went on to become the head of the CP-initiated International Labor Defense and later the founder of the American Trotskyist movement, dedicated May Day 1921 to the memory and defense of class-war prisoners.

Every war has its hazards: the class war more than any other, for the organized workers wage it for the largest stakes in all the world's history—for the Earth and all its fruits, for the complete expropriation of the present-day ruling class. In this worldwide struggle there is no compromise and no quarter. The aim of the workers is nothing less than the complete abolition of the capitalist system. Both classes are organizing on an international scale.

The list of the prisoners of the class war—the Workers' Roll of Honor—is a long one and it increases steadily in spite of all the predictions that "normal conditions" of civil liberty will be restored. There can be no more normal conditions. This is the era of the world revolution. The war is on and there will be no more peace until the workers triumph everywhere.

It is to be expected that many will fall in battle and many be taken prisoner by the enemy before the final goal is reached. The ruling class today is the capitalist class. They maintain themselves in power by force and violence. They make the laws according to their own class interests. The revolutionary movement is a menace to their system. Therefore it is an outlaw movement. Everyone who takes an active part in the struggle for the liberation of the working class takes a chance of going to prison. When the workers get on top they will reverse the order of things. The workers will make the laws then according to their class interests. They will outlaw their class enemies and put them in jail. That is what they are doing in Russia today. It is a very simple proposition. Absolutely natural, absolutely necessary....

The day is coming when the toiling masses of America will hear that appeal and act upon it. Then the prison doors will be opened and the prisoners set free, for the masses have an authority higher than that of any court. To redouble our efforts to hasten on the day of liberation is the pledge we make to our imprisoned comrades on this First of May.

—James P. Cannon, "The Political Prisoners" (1921), reprinted in
James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism
(Prometheus Research Library, 1992)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 16 December.

No. 816 **26 December 2003**

On Cuba and the SWP

New York
5 November 2003

Dear *Workers Vanguard*,

Referring to the California gubernatorial campaign of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), to which we gave critical support during the recent recall vote, we wrote: "The SWP fails to characterize what kind of society Cuba is, leaving the impression that it supports Cuba from the standpoint of Third World national liberation" (*WV* No. 810, 26 September). The SWP platform, as printed in the official state handbook, indeed did not make the point that Cuba is a deformed workers state. But during the campaign, the SWP also described Cuba as follows in an editorial titled, "Campaign for Britton in California" (*Militant*, 15 September):

> "The Cuban Revolution today is a living example that working people have the capacity to transform the world. The road charted in Cuba is necessary and possible in the United States and around the world, too. It is the road of working people developing the kind of leadership that can transform our unions into fighting organizations and lead working people to take political power."

The SWP certainly recognizes that a *class transformation* took place in Cuba. But the SWP does not fight for socialist revolution in the U.S. and for proletarian political revolution in Cuba itself to oust the Stalinist Castro bureaucracy—i.e., it does not fight for *genuine* defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Leon Trotsky was a leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, the first and to date only successful workers revolution. He explained that in the Soviet Union it took a political counterrevolution for the Stalinist bureaucracy to achieve its domination. In the deformed workers states of Cuba, North Korea, China and Vietnam this usurpation of power existed from birth. In Cuba, for example, a petty-bourgeois movement under highly exceptional circumstances—the absence of the working class as a contender for social power in its own right, the flight of the national bourgeoisie and hostile imperialist encirclement, and a lifeline thrown by the Soviet Union—was able to overthrow the old Batista dictatorship and eventually smash capitalist property relations. But the bonapartist regime the Castro clique threw up became a roadblock to extending and deepening the revolution. There is no workers democracy in Cuba—i.e., the working class does not have political power. In the absence of the direct rule of the working class, someone else fills that vacuum, and that someone is Castro and his cohorts.

The overthrow of capitalism in Cuba in 1960-61 has served as an acid test for

continued on page 5

Note to Our Readers

Workers Vanguard subscribers will notice that the 2003 article index is not in this issue of the paper. Since 1981, our annual index has always been included in the last issue of the year. The index is an extremely useful tool—not least for those comrades who write and edit *WV*—as it gives readers the opportunity to easily search for an article by category. Unlike many of our political opponents on the left, we have always prided ourselves on our honesty and our historical record. The index provides an easily accessible way to search the historical record of *Workers Vanguard*.

We plan to have the 2003 index out very soon. It will be mailed to all our subscribers, and it will be included in the 2003 bound volume of the paper.

Exchanges on the California Recall Elections

4 November 2003

To the Editor

The October 24th issue of *Workers Vanguard* contains, along with your regular barrage of polemical fury against all those on the left who dare to stand outside your ranks, a blatant and easily checked falsehood. In the article "The California Recall and the Left," you argue that members of the socialist organization Solidarity work in the Democratic Party, asserting, "The DSA and CCDS actually work in the Democratic Party, as do some members of Solidarity!" No member of Solidarity works inside the Democratic Party and opposition to the classic CP/social-democratic strategy of realignment in the Democratic Party is one of its founding points of unity. "The capitalist parties, especially the Republican and Democratic parties, are fundamentally anti-working class, racist and sexist. We oppose any form of participation in or support for these parties. We call for the working class and its allies to form a new, independent political party that fights for their needs" (Solidarity Basis of Political Agreement, 1986, available at www.solidarity-us.org). I expect to see a public correction in the next issue.

Comradely Greetings,
Will Fulford-Jones

***WV* Replies:**

We have no idea if Fulford-Jones—who is a supporter but not a formal member of Solidarity—is naive or cynical. Solidarity's 1986 "Basis of Political Agreement," which he quotes, has never prevented individual members from working within capitalist parties—Democratic Party included. In 1987, while Sheila Jordan was a prominent supporter of Solidarity, she was elected, *as a Democrat*, to the Oakland, California school board. Active in her campaign was her companion, Larry Cooperman, a member of Solidarity's leading committee (for details see "Third Camp Over the Rainbow, Again: 'Sheilagate'," *WV* No. 438, 16 October 1987).

her of Solidarity and a disarmament activist" when he wrote in *Against the Current* (September-October 1988):

> "As a revolutionary socialist, I was excited when Jackson first campaigned five years ago. I worked on the 1984 campaign and attempted (unsuccessfully) to help build a post-election Rainbow Coalition in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, Michigan. In 1988, I defended Jackson in Solidarity—a lonely task. In between I was intermittently involved in local Democratic Party politics, largely in the hope that Rainbow activism might advance socialist goals."

In the end, Schwartz reported being disillusioned with Rainbow politics. Far from being thrown out of Solidarity for violating its putative "principles," his views were published in the journal—all part of the oh-so-comradely debate.

Fulford-Jones would probably like to claim that Solidarity's flirtations with the Democratic Party in 1987-88 represented nothing but a temporary spell of weakness while the newly founded organization got its feet on the ground. Not so. We remember the way the late fake-Trotskyist Ernest Mandel—whom the Fourth Internationalist Caucus of Solidarity looked to for years as their international leader—treated his cothinker, the Polish dissident and Solidarność adviser, Jacek Kuron. All throughout the 1980s, Mandel and his Paris-based United Secretariat (USec) lauded Kuron as a "Trotskyist" and Solidarność—the reactionary, pro-capitalist and clericalist movement backed by the CIA and the Vatican—as a revolutionary organization of Polish workers. But when Solidarność finally took over the reins of government in 1989, with Kuron as labor minister, and began repressing workers struggles as it dismantled the Polish deformed workers state, Mandel suddenly disowned Kuron, insisting, "I don't speak to ministers." How dare Kuron take the next logical step and give the game away!

American Solidarity took its name from counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność. Its entire political strategy is based on building "movements"—local and national—whose aim is to get the

WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at February 2000 NYC protest against acquittal of cops who gunned down Amadou Diallo.

We assume that Jordan, who is currently the superintendent of schools in California's Alameda County, has long since departed the reformist Solidarity swamp in search of firmer support for her electoral ambitions. Her election as a Democrat was something of a scandal for Solidarity. But it was no personal aberration. In 1987-88 Solidarity was embroiled in an internal debate over whether or not to support Jesse Jackson's run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. While Solidarity as a whole did not support Jackson, some members did. Take, for example, Justin Schwartz, who was described as a "member of Solidarity and a disarmament activist" when he wrote in *Against the Current* (September-October 1988):

> "As a revolutionary socialist, I was excited when Jackson first campaigned five years ago. I worked on the 1984 campaign and attempted (unsuccessfully) to help build a post-election Rainbow Coalition in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, Michigan. In 1988, I defended Jackson in Solidarity—a lonely task. In between I was intermittently involved in local Democratic Party politics, largely in the hope that Rainbow activism might advance socialist goals."

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American Solidarity took its name from counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność. Its entire political strategy is based on building "movements"—local and national—whose aim is to get the bourgeois state to change its priorities and start acting in the interests of the oppressed. Such movements are inevitably saturated with the politics of lesser-evil electoralism and dominated by the Democratic Party. So it's the height of hypocrisy for Fulford-Jones or anyone else to complain when they suddenly discover that, for some members, the mask inevitably fuses with the face.

If *Against the Current* has not lately been publishing the testimonials of Solidarity members working within the Democratic Party, this simply reflects the current lack of enthusiasm for any of the Democratic Party's lackluster presidential hopefuls. This could change. In the meantime, there's the Green Party, lately the darling of the petty-bourgeois milieus in which Solidarity plies its wares. *Against the Current* published a glowing account by one Michael Rubin, described as "a member of Solidarity in the Bay Area, a public worker trade unionist and a Green," of Peter Camejo's 2002 bid for California governor ("The Camejo-Warren Campaign: Greens Grow in California," *Against the Current*, January-February 2003). When Camejo again ran for governor in the 2003 recall election, Solidarity co-sponsored, along with the International Socialist Organization and the Greens, Camejo's University of California at Berkeley campaign appearance (*Against the Current*, November-December 2003).

Camejo cut his political teeth as a reformist hack (and sometime presidential candidate) in the reformist Socialist Workers Party of the 1960s and 1970s, as did many of Solidarity's Mandelite members. During his 2003 campaign, he stated his admiration for Democratic candidate Cruz Bustamante, declaring, "I met with Bustamante for two hours in July, we talked mostly in Spanish, and I saw a guy who's very frank, very straightforward. I don't see a guy who's slamming the door in my face, like Gray Davis" (*San Jose Mercury News*, 22 September). Fulford-Jones should wake up and smell the (organic?) coffee—the Greens are one of those "anti-working class, racist and sexist" capitalist parties that Solidarity claims (on paper) to be against.

* * *

October 16, 2003

Dear WV editor,

In regard to your September 26, 2003 issue of WV, I'd like to make two points. First, on page 10 you wrote, "The working class must seize power and establish its own government to expropriate the capitalist system."

Any honest, fair-minded and reasonable Marxist understands what you are trying to say and totally supports it. But you are saying it in a very slovenly way, and that's the problem. The two chief components of the capitalist system are capitalist property (the means of production and its ancillaries), and the organs of government. Following the revolution these two factors are to be handled very differently. Marxists wish to replace the capitalist system by *expropriating* the means of production and *abolishing* all capitalist state organs. There is a huge difference here. To expropriate means to take over someone's property and use it for different ends. Marxists will expropriate the means of production and put them under workers' control in order to create an egalitarian society. Marxists do not wish to expropriate or to put under workers' control the Marines, CIA, Treasury Dept., and the US Congress, etc. for the achievement of socialism. Marxists wish to dismantle/abolish these organizations.

The formulation you employed—expropriate the capitalist system—can easily be opened up to a reformist interpretation, i.e. Marxists will take over (expropriate) the capitalist system and put a human face on it. I know your *penchant* for using words precisely in order to avoid programmatic ambiguity and/or misunderstanding. It is in that sense that I bring this misleading misformulation to your attention so that it will not be used again.

Secondly, in the same issue of WV, I read with disbelieving eyes your supporting the recall of Governor Davis and your critical support to the SWP's gubernatorial candidacy in the California re-call election. You justify the former by quoting, with great approbation, the WWP, "The Workers World Party correctly points out that 'organizing for a no vote on the recall gives legitimacy to the Gray Davis administration.'" (WV page 11) That's absolutely true. That's what the positive act of *opposing* the recall vote did in effect—support Davis.

Sheila Jordan, a supporter of Solidarity, registered as a Democrat in 1987.

But let's apply the flip test. What did the positive act of *supporting* the recall vote do? It supported the anti-Davis electoral putsch of the Republicans. Every vote for the recall of the jejune and featureless Democratic Davis was objectively one vote for election of that muscleheaded misogynistic Republican Schwarzenegger. Everyone knew that should the recall have been successful Schwarzenegger was *destined* to win. Every vote for the recall, regardless of one's succeeding vote for a minority candidate, was just another step forward for Schwarzenegger.

The other candidates from Peter Camejo (with his glib petit-bourgeois utopian capitalist schemes) to the washed-out dwarfish TV child star and the jiggling big-hoobed porno actress represented nothing but a hilarious commentary on an increasingly demented capitalism. Whichever way you looked at the recall movement, pro or con, one was supporting either the Republicans or Democrats despite all assurances, protestations and the 133 other candidates to the contrary.

I believe that the only correct strategy was to abstain on the recall question and tell the workers, "Stay home! This is only another capitalist election. Whichever side wins, workers and minorities will lose—big time!" Or, given your critical support to the SWP, you should have told your readers, "Don't pull either the 'yes' or 'no' lever on the recall portion of the ballot. Just pull the lever for the SWP."

Now I have no problem in principle with giving critical support to the SWP. My questions are "What was the point? What did you really accomplish?"

In your article you adduced only two positive reasons for voting for the SWP: A. Vote for these reformists. When they get into power you will see how they betray the workers. B. The SWP calls for bringing home all the troops now.

Regarding the first reason, it is valid if one is dealing with a mass reformist party with broad roots in the working class—a party that has some kind of realistic chance of getting in and exposing itself before its working class base. The SWP has neither mass roots nor a working class base. So the call for critical support of the SWP speaks to absolutely nobody of any historical significance. Secondly, the SWP had zero chance of getting into the governor's mansion. So absolutely no

continued on page 5

Canada: Anglo-Chauvinist Provocations on the Rise

Independence for Quebec!

We reprint below an article from Spartacist Canada *No. 139 (Winter 2003/2004), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada, section of the International Communist League.*

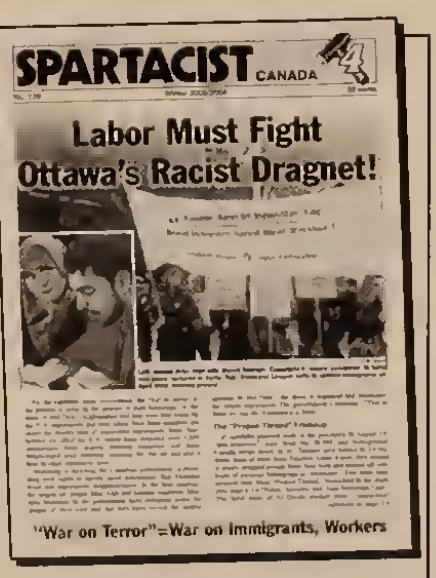
SPARTACIST CANADA

With the Parti Québécois [PQ] out of office and a hard-line federalist government in place in Quebec City, the Canadian rulers are gloating that the Quebec national question has been "solved." "Mission accomplished," bragged [then Prime Minister] Jean Chrétien as he prepared to hand the federal Liberal Party reins to Paul Martin: "The country is more united than ever." Far from it. The polls show support for sovereignty in Quebec back up to 47 percent, and such sentiments will surely rise further in the face of new chauvinist provocations from English Canada and savage austerity attacks by the Quebec Liberal government.

Encouraged by the new provincial regime of [Quebec Liberal Party premier] Jean Charest, anglophones in bourgeois Westmount and the middle-class suburbs on Montreal's West Island are agitating to withdraw from the largely francophone city and re-establish separate, privileged enclaves. Electronics giant Sony created an uproar in Quebec by marketing a video game whose object was to shoot down "terrorists" from a "Quebec Liberation Front" attacking Toronto malls and subways.

One of Chrétien's parting insults—renaming Dorval Airport in Montreal after his mentor Pierre Trudeau—has also provoked widespread opposition. Trudeau is despised in much of Quebec for invoking the War Measures Act in October 1970. Using the excuse of two kidnappings by the Front de Libération du Québec, he sent the army to occupy Montreal, suspending civil liberties and jailing hundreds of nationalists, leftists and labor leaders.

Recent revelations that the federal government was again ready to send troops to Quebec in 1995 if the Yes side won the sovereignty referendum underscore how the forcible retention of Quebec in a "united" country is a cornerstone of capitalist Canada. As revolutionary internationalists and fighters against all aspects of oppression, we Trotskyists advocate independence for Quebec. This is a crucial component of our fight to make the working class conscious of the need to sweep away the rule of the exploiters through a socialist revolution.



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Quebec is a distinct nation with its own language, culture and increasingly separate development. The subjugation of the Québécois at the hands of Canada's Anglo rulers has sharply divided the working class on national lines, deeply undermining the prospects for proletarian struggle. In English Canada, the workers are imbued with reactionary "pro-Canada" patriotism, including by the NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] and the trade-union bureaucracy. In turn, this poisonous anti-Quebec bigotry has driven the historically more militant Québécois working class into the arms of the bourgeois-nationalist PQ and Bloc Québécois. Meanwhile, immigrants and Native people are caught in the national-chauvinist crossfire, targeted for racist scapegoating on all sides. Quebec independence would remove a major obstacle to proletarian class consciousness, laying a basis for workers in both nations to see that their "own" capitalist exploiters are the enemy, not each other.

Canapress

Canadian troops occupied Montreal in October 1970, arresting hundreds of unionists and leftists.

Ottawa's Military Plans Against Quebec

The rulers in Ottawa also declared a "death of separatism" after the PQ lost the elections in 1985. At that time, support for even a watered-down "sovereignty-association" had plummeted to 15 percent. But only a few years later, angered by the Anglo-chauvinist bigotry that swept the country against the Meech Lake Accord's simple assertion that Quebec was a "distinct society," hundreds of thousands of Québécois were marching in the streets with fleur-de-lys flags. By 1995, Canada was on the brink of breaking apart, as the sovereignty referendum failed by a single percentage point.

A new book by Lawrence Martin, *Iron Man: The Defiant Reign of Jean Chrétien*, describes the panic that swept the federal Liberal cabinet as they realized they might lose the referendum. While Chrétien prepared a speech declaring that a winning referendum would merely be a "consultative exercise," the government worked out contingency plans to send in the army "to protect federal property." The book quotes then defense minister David Collenette: "I was in a tough position.... There were things that went on that we had to prepare for that I don't even want to talk about."

Chrétien, of course, denies it all. "C'est de la bullshit," he told reporters. But as Chantal Hébert noted in her [Toronto] *Globe and Mail* column (24 October):

> "For anyone who followed the federal scene in those tense 1995 days, the surprise would be that the issue of using troops to deal with civil strife after a Yes vote did not come up....
>
> "Based on rhetoric alone, the chances of violent federalist reprisals against sovereignists seemed more plausible than the reverse."

Ottawa's repeated moves and threats to use military force against national and social struggle in Quebec testify to the violent, chauvinist reality behind Canada's "tolerant, peace-loving" image. The army was sent to Quebec to "restore order" amid nationalist anti-conscription protests during World War I. Less than two years after Trudeau sent the troops in 1970, several dozen top Canadian military leaders met secretly at a Montreal hotel on 18-19 April 1972 to discuss plans for a more sustained invasion and occupation of Quebec. Also present were senior British military officers, who described their experiences in the army occupation of Northern Ireland.

This high-level plan for a military crackdown, "Exercise Neat Pitch," came amid major social turmoil and working-class radicalization in Quebec. Hundreds of thousands of public-sector workers were embroiled in the first of two general strikes that swept the province that spring. The second, which included the industrial private sector, saw strikers seize whole towns in the most deep-going proletarian struggle this country has ever seen. The story of "Neat Pitch," still largely suppressed in the English Canadian media, only came to light thanks to one of the few francophone officers present, Captain Jean-René-Marcel Sauvé, who became so troubled that he leaked a copy to an aide to [senior PQ figure] Jacques Parizeau (Presse Canadienne, 5 April 2002).

Faced with a wall of hostility from English Canada—NDP leader David Lewis openly supported the jailing of Quebec labor leaders—the aspirations of the Quebec working class were channeled into the bourgeois-nationalist PQ. Then, following the 1976 election of the first PQ government, Trudeau again threatened to "use the sword" against any moves toward independence. And while the details of Ottawa's military preparations in 1995 remain shrouded in mystery, the months leading up to the referendum saw several military provocations. On August 26, a convoy of hundreds of military vehicles was sent across Quebec. The same month, the secretive "anti-terrorist" Joint Task Force 2 conducted an exercise in an east-end Montreal suburb. Residents of Anjou were awakened in the middle of the night as soldiers descended in Twin Huey helicopters and fired ear-splitting stun grenades.

As support for sovereignty surged in the late days of the referendum campaign, the government in Ottawa and top business circles added economic blackmail to the mix. Paul Martin raved that a million jobs would be lost if the Yes side won. Chrétien warned the elderly that they would lose their pensions in a sovereign Quebec. Capitalist magnates like Laurent Beaudoin of Bombardier threatened to shift operations out of Quebec in the event of independence. In the final days before the vote, the Canadian rulers worked with top business leaders to organize a massive flag-waving "unity" rally in Montreal. Employees were encouraged to take time off (with pay) to attend, while Air Canada and Via Rail slashed fares to Montreal by 90 percent and phone companies offered free long-distance calls to build this chauvinist "We love Canada" event.

Quebec and the Left

We called for a Yes vote in the 1995 referendum, headlining our leaflet "Break the Grip of National Chauvinism—Independence for Quebec!" (*SC* No. 106, November/December 1995). Our principled stance was in sharp contrast to "leftists" who placed themselves in the camp of Anglo chauvinism. The NDP, of course, was front and center in the "pro-Canada" campaign. The Communist Party similarly campaigned for a No vote, issuing an "urgent appeal for a united Canada."

Bringing up the rear was the tiny anti-Spartacist sect called the "International Bolshevik Tendency" (IBT), whose leaflet (issued only in English) also called on Quebec workers to vote No to independence. So outrageous was the IBT's stand that their only Quebec member, as he quit, denounced the group's "de facto bloc with the Canadian bourgeoisie." The IBT was even invited by federalist organizers to attend the chauvinist "Canadian unity" rally in Montreal on the eve of the referendum! As their ex-member noted, "To be fair, you quite properly rejected the invitation, but it shouldn't have been made in the first place. The issue this raises is how the IBT's propaganda effort was perceived by the 'Canadian Unity' business lobby. You were viewed as standing on the 'right side' of the political divide." (For more details, see "'Bolshevik Tendency' Opposes Quebec Independence," *SC* No. 108, March/April 1996.)

In the wake of the narrow referendum defeat, popular agitation for independence receded, as the PQ concentrated on managing capitalist Quebec on the backs of working people and the poor. Chrétien took the opportunity to push through the Clarity Act, legislation that effectively denies Quebec's democratic right to self-determination. The New Democrats again underlined their adherence to the chauvinist Canadian status quo by supporting Chrétien's anti-Quebec edict.

Maclean's

Chauvinist "Canadian unity" rally in Montreal, November 1995.

Cuba and the SWP...

(continued from page 2)

revolutionaries from the beginning. The Spartacist League originated as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) in the SWP in 1961-63. The RT reaffirmed that a petty-bourgeois, peasant-based guerrilla movement could not replace the Leninist party of the working class as a revolutionary vanguard. The model Marxist party is the Bolshevik Party that led the Russian Revolution. The SWP emerged from the Cold War in the early 1960s having lost confidence in the prospect of working-class revolution. They eagerly leaped onto the massively popular Fidelista bandwagon, and they have never gotten off. In the *WV* article on the recall elections, we rightly noted: "The SWP is... utterly uncritical of Fidel Castro, whose accommodation to U.S. imperialism has led him to stab in the back countless struggles of workers and peasants throughout Latin America."

When the SWP gave uncritical support to the petty-bourgeois Castro government, they abandoned a revolutionary proletarian perspective and the vanguard party necessary to bring communist class consciousness to the proletariat, not only in Cuba but elsewhere—witness their talk of the Cuban Revolution being a model for the U.S. working class. Their labeling of the Cuban regime as a "Workers and Farmers Government" was a cover for a bureaucratic caste exercising a monopoly of political power *over* the working class.

At an October 15 event of the Los Angeles Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba which the SWP helped organize, a Spartacist League comrade spoke from the floor:

> "Fidel Castro's policy, which is supported by the Socialist Workers Party and Workers World Party, has been to conciliate the imperialists—like Democratic Party politician Jimmy Carter, who went to Cuba to promote the State Department-funded counterrevolutionary Varela Project. Castro welcomed Carter and gave him a platform just as he did the reactionary Pope.... In contrast to reformist groups like the SWP, we give no political support to the Castro bureaucracy. There needs to be a proletarian political revolution in Cuba to put political power into the hands of the working class organized into soviets. Defense of the gains of the Cuban Revolution means, most importantly, struggling for workers revolution in this country, the imperialist belly of the beast, contrary to Castro's Stalinist ideology of 'socialism in one country' that is supported by the SWP."

With the Boris Yeltsin-led counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the gains of the Cuban Revolution have been thrown into the gravest danger. The SWP supported Yeltsin in the name of "democratic rights," a position they cover for now by ludicrously claiming that Russia is still some kind of workers state!

The fact of the matter is that the SWP not only glorifies the Castro bureaucracy but also bourgeois third-world nationalists and social movements far more retrograde. In our recall article, we wrote of the SWP: "In 1979 it actually hailed Ayatollah Khomeini's assumption of power in Iran as an anti-imperialist victory! Increasingly, the SWP has drifted toward enthusiasm for Third World nationalists like Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, and statements by Islamic reactionary Osama bin Laden have been printed in the *Militant* (see *Militant* online, 29 October 2001, for an example)."

In 1982 Jack Barnes, then and still today leader of the SWP, formally renounced Trotskyism and permanent revolution. But programmatically and organizationally the SWP abandoned Trotskyism in deed two decades earlier with their embrace of the Castro regime and expulsion of the Revolutionary Tendency, the predecessor of the Spartacist League.

Comradely,
Karen Cole

Recall...

(continued from page 3)

one would see what those weird reformist scoundrels are really capable of doing in the event of their victory.

And as for their call of bringing the troops home now, you are quite correct. That is an eminently supportable slogan. But wait! The SWP called for bringing home all the troops during the Vietnam War during their 1964, 1968, and 1972 presidential campaigns. ***You never gave them critical support then.*** Yet you gave them critical support now! Has the SWP changed for the better in this 40-year interval? No, they have openly rejected Trotskyism. So why have you reversed your 40-year-old position of not supporting their bring-the-troops-home-now electoral campaigns and supported the SWP electoral campaign in 2003?

I eagerly await your response!

Sincerely,
P.S.
(A very long time WV reader)

* * *

Detroit MI
October 14, 2003

Letterbox, WV,

When you come out with no support for the Democrats, no more than for the Republicans, aren't you, in this particular case of the coming presidential election—aren't you, albeit unconsciously, repeating Stalin's grotesque error in the early-'30s?—his telling (or ordering) the German CP to have nothing to do with the Social Democrats, absolutely no united front with the latter, calling 'em social fascists. It enabled Hitler to win.

Not that you're calling the Democrats fascist, but might your outlook on this coming election be analogous to that Stalin Third Period?

S.C.

***WV* Replies:**

P.S.'s initial point is well taken. It is precisely to explain why it is necessary to forge a workers government to *expropriate* the capitalists and *abolish* their machinery of class oppression that revolutionary Marxists intervene into bourgeois elections. In the U.S., where the workers are tied to the ruling class through the trade-union misleadership's allegiance to the Democratic Party, a key task is to advance the understanding that the labor movement must have a party of its own, one that stands completely independent of the capitalists, their state and their parties. Our call for a "yes" vote in the California recall election, and for a vote for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) gubernatorial candidate, was the most effective way to underscore our principled opposition to all capitalist parties.

As we said in "The California Recall and the Left" (*WV* No. 812, 24 October), the SWP's Joel Britton was "the one candidate on the ballot whose campaign drew even a crude class line against capitalism and war." Our vote to Britton was from the perspective of *critical support*, and we noted that the SWP's quirky reformist program and nominal existence means that it is not a step to the kind of revolutionary party the working class needs. In that context, P.S. has a factual error that is quite instructive. We did in fact campaign for a vote to the SWP in the 1964 presidential election, despite its call to "Withdraw the troops from Viet Nam and send them to Mississippi," which disarmed civil rights activists by building false illusions that the federal government would "protect" them from racist attack. At the time, the SWP—from which our tendency had just been expelled—still professed to stand on the principles of revolutionary Trotskyism, and our critical support for its candidates best enabled us to expose its reformist practice. By 1968, the SWP had completed its slide from centrism to outright reformism, and it was actively building a bloc with liberal Democratic politicians speaking for a defeatist wing of the bourgeoisie over the Vietnam War. As there was no longer a contradiction between its formal program and its practice, we did not give it critical support in that election or the ones to follow. In the recent recall elections, however, the SWP took a clear position on the side of Iraq against the American invasion and occupation, and was explicitly critical when the current antiwar movement espoused the same class-collaborationist politics that the SWP pursued three decades before.

In the face of an even critically supportable working-class candidate, P.S.'s position of abstention in the California recall would have been in fact to lend backhanded support to the Democratic Party. Indeed, though he does not hold this position, the logic of P.S.'s argument is what is expressed explicitly by S.C.: support for "lesser evil" electoral politics—i.e., the Democrats. Contrary to what S.C. implies, the Republican Party is not a fascist party; nor is the capitalist Democratic Party, unlike the German Social Democratic Party, part of the workers movement. Moreover, Trotsky's point in Germany was not *electoral support* to the Social Democrats, which implies an endorsement of their political program. He argued for a fighting united front—a series of *actions*—between Communist and Social Democratic workers organizations to defeat the fascists, in the course of which the Communists could make clear to the Social Democratic ranks that only the Communists had the program that could make the necessary socialist revolution.■

Today, some elements in the youthful activist milieu, notably among the anarchists, dismiss the Quebec national question as an irrelevancy, or merely a trap set by the PQ and Bloc to lull workers and the oppressed. This could not be more false. The national oppression of the Québécois within the Canadian state cannot be wished away: English Canadian chauvinism and the Quebec nationalism it engenders are constantly used by the bourgeois rulers to tie the workers to the class enemy, undermining the class struggle.

Take the struggles now brewing in Quebec against the Charest government's austerity onslaught on welfare, social services and union jobs. Quebec union leaders are vowing to "mount the barricades" against Charest's "declaration of war." Working-class struggle mobilizing Quebec's poor, unemployed and minorities is indeed urgently needed. But the labor tops' main goal is to channel the anger accumulating at the base of Quebec society into revived illusions in the PQ—the same party that attacked workers' jobs and livelihoods as well as social programs like health care while in office.

The PQ government's attacks provoked widespread opposition, notably the hugely popular 1999 nurses strike. But now, in opposition, the péquistes [members of the PQ] and their labor lieutenants can again play the card of "national solidarity" against English Canada and federalist politicians like Charest. PQ leader Bernard Landry cynically gloats, "We are no longer in a position to create dissatisfaction, and the Liberals are," adding: "At the end of the present cycle we will make Quebec an independent nation" (*Globe and Mail*, 21 June).

Bourgeois labor haters like the PQ and Bloc use the all-too-real provocations of the English Canadian rulers to tie the workers to their coattails. As forthright opponents of Anglo bigotry and champions of Quebec independence in English Canada, we Trotskyists can with clean hands explain to the Québécois workers why nationalism is an obstacle to the struggle to emancipate working people and the oppressed.

Our proletarian internationalist stance is in sharp contrast to the "left" nationalist groupings—Union des Forces Progressistes (UFP), D'Abord Solidaires, etc.—who peddle illusions about the "progressive" nature of Quebec nationalism and act as pressure groups on the PQ and its allies in the labor bureaucracy. The UFP in particular aspires only to be a Québécois version of the NDP, another social-democratic obstacle to anti-capitalist class consciousness and struggle.

The Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste fights to forge a revolutionary vanguard party which takes up the cause of all the oppressed. While supporting Quebec independence, we also fight to mobilize labor's power on behalf of Native people and immigrants, who today face stepped-up racist attacks from the capitalist rulers, anglophone and francophone alike. This notably includes Quebec's large Arab and Muslim population, who are particular targets of the rulers' reactionary "war on terror." Stop the deportations of Algerian, Palestinian and other refugees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

The "united Canada" upheld by the English Canadian labor bureaucracy and especially the NDP can only mean continued national oppression of the Québécois people and a dampening of class struggle. We fight for the only perspective that can weld together the struggles of working people—English Canadian, Québécois; immigrant, Native—against the brutal and bloody capitalist system that oppresses us all. Down with Anglo chauvinism! Break with bourgeois nationalism! For Quebec independence! Forward to North American socialist revolution!■

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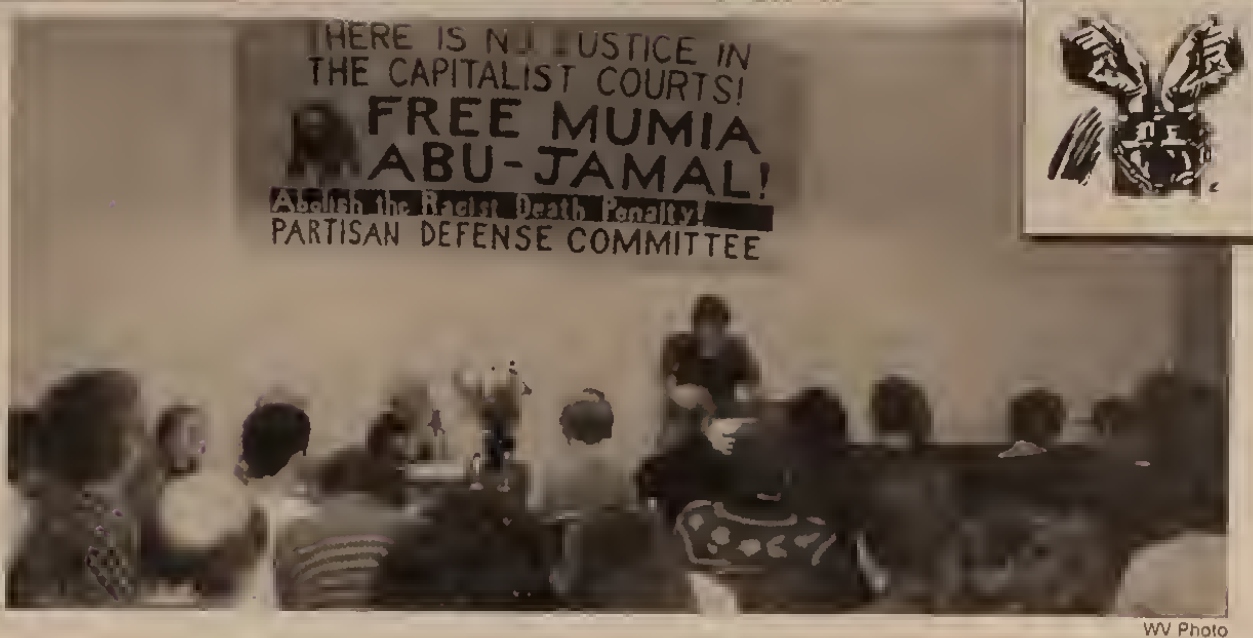
"We Need to Build Our Own Workers Party"

Bay Area Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

We reprint below, in slightly edited form, speeches by Spartacist League spokesman Mo Pirouzy and Labor Black League spokesman Jido Cooper to the Partisan Defense Committee Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners, held on December 7 in the San Francisco Bay Area.



WV Photo

Mo Pirouzy, Spartacist League

I'd like to start with crying out loud: Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! The U.S. imperialists are looters and murderers. What has happened in Iraq is not so much a war but a one-sided slaughter. Untold thousands of Iraqis have been killed through air strikes and overwhelming American military might. The U.S. war against the Iraqi people continues in the form of colonial occupation, which has sparked popular and justified resistance among Iraqis and proven deadly for American soldiers.

We recognize that both Iraqis and the American workers are facing a common enemy, the U.S. capitalist ruling class. Our message: It is impossible to oppose war without opposing the capitalist system that breeds it and the capitalist parties that carry it out. We challenge illusions in the reformability of the bloody American imperialist state. We are for mobilizing the only force that can challenge the rule of the capitalist class—the working class.

It is important to understand that the enslavement of Iraq is yet another price that the international working class is paying for the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state through capitalist counterrevolution. Today's imperialist global rampage would have been impossible when the USSR still existed. And unlike most of the reformist left who howled with the imperialist wolves, we Trotskyists of the International Communist League fought to the bitter end in defense of the Soviet workers state and its collectivized property. This defense was despite and against the Stalinist misrule that had opened the door to counterrevolution.

This year's benefit takes place in the context of heightened state repression at home. The so-called "war on terror," backed by both Republicans and Democrats, is the government's pretext for increasing its power to spy on the population, target leftists, attack civil liberties, break the power of the unions, deport immigrants and "disappear" citizens.

Over the last two decades, America's capitalists have secured fabulous riches through increasing the exploitation of the working class, while slashing social programs benefiting the poor and particularly the black ghetto masses. America's rulers *hate* and *fear* the people. It is in this context of growing social inequality—and the potential for an upsurge in social struggle—that the capitalists' state reinforces its arsenal of state repression. For example, when the ILWU was locked in a showdown with the union-busting shipping bosses in June 2002, Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge threatened that any strike action by the workers would be a threat to "national security." The repression the government seeks to unleash is completely consistent with the military dictatorships that the U.S. has supported over the years—the Shah of Iran, Somoza of Nicaragua, Batista, Pinochet of Chile, just to name a few. Our point here is that what the government can get away with will be determined in the class struggle, on the picket line and in the streets.

Attacks on labor, racist assaults by the cops, the reactionary assault on women's right to abortion, cuts in education, the Iraqi quagmire—all will bring, inevitably, a response from the workers, unions, immigrants, black militants and the youth. The question is under which leadership and under what banner will the masses wage their struggle. The trade-union bureaucracy's policy is that of "America first" chauvinist protectionism, which divides the working class internationally, and the promotion of the Democratic Party, to which the union bureaucracy is intimately linked and obligated.

From February 9, 2002, when we mobilized workers against the anti-immigrant witchhunt, to our Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents defending Iraq at the big antiwar demos, we have sought to show how a revolutionary party would fight to mobilize the working class independent of the capitalist parties, Democrats and Republicans both. The reformist socialists who organized the antiwar demos deliberately kept them "respectable," deliberately obscured the fact that imperialism is a system and deliberately channeled people into

Free Vanunu Now!

Statement by Mordechai Vanunu Defense Committee

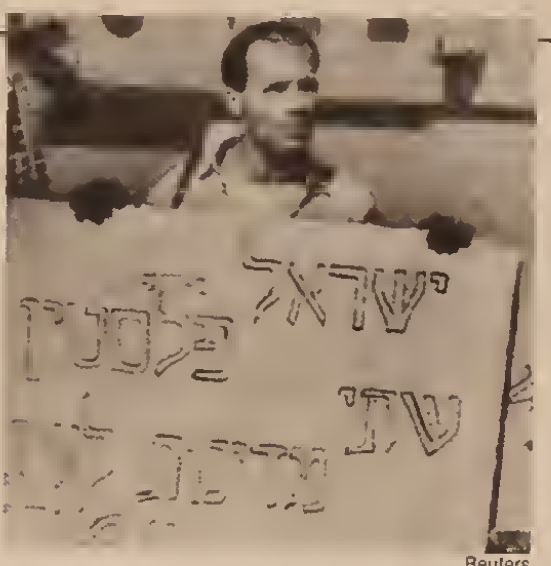
The following statement by Jeannie Shaterian of the Bay Area Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu was read out at the Bay Area PDC Holiday Appeal on December 7.

Mordechai Vanunu was kidnapped by Israel's intelligence service, Mossad, September 30, 1986, given a closed trial, convicted of treason and espionage, and sentenced to eighteen years. The first eleven-plus years were spent in solitary confinement. Recently he was returned to solitary confinement for three weeks for disobeying prison regulations. His mail is censored and delayed, his visitors restricted to his family, legal team, and priest. He has been repeatedly denied parole.

What did he do? For nine years he was a technician at the so-called Negev Nuclear Research Center near Dimona, in reality a plant manufacturing components for atomic and thermonuclear weapons. As the years progressed he grew more and more disturbed by his part in it. He was deeply affected by the devastation wrought on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, by the unjust nature of Israeli society, and by the insanity of Israel's open secret—the bombs everyone knew about and no one mentioned, the lack of public debate about such an important issue. Before he was laid off, he smuggled in a camera and took extensive pictures of the plant (available on the U.S. Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu's Web site). He didn't get them developed for many months, after traveling through Asia to Australia and converting to Christianity. (His Orthodox Jewish parents emigrated from Morocco to Israel when he was eight years old. He is the second of eleven children.) Although he didn't seek out publicity, but told his story to a small church group, the *Sunday Times* of London heard of him and sent a reporter to check him out. By the time his story and photographs were published in October 1986, he had already disappeared. It took the Israeli government (Shimon Peres, one of the fathers of the Israeli bomb, was Prime Minister) six weeks to acknowledge his presence in Israel. He was treated especially harshly because he had broken two sacred taboos: documenting the manufacture of nuclear weapons and breaking with Judaism.

Almost immediately an international campaign for his release arose, with its most active branches in Israel, the UK, Norway, and the U.S. He has won numerous awards in absentia, including the Right Livelihood Award and the 2002 Nuclear Free Future Award for Resistance. Amnesty International, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Mairead Corrigan Maguire and Archbishop Desmond Tutu have spoken out for his release, as have government, religious, scientific, and creative arts people and activists throughout the world. Of course, it has been in the interests of both Israel and the U.S. to keep him as quiet and forgotten as possible, for if the U.S. admits Israel has nuclear weapons, all its aid to Israel becomes illegal according to U.S. law (the Symington Amendment of 1977).

Over the last few years there have been many significant cracks in Israel's policy of nuclear ambiguity, both within and outside of Israel. This March the BBC produced a documentary, "Israel's Secret Weapon," dealing with Israel's weapons of mass destruction, chemical and biological as well as nuclear, the history of its nuclear build-up, the Vanunu case, worker safety and environmental hazards at the reactor, the secrecy policy and U.S. official reaction to all this. The Israeli government broke its ties with the BBC because of this show. On October 12 the *L.A. Times* did an extensive feature, "Israel Adds Fuel to Nuclear Dispute," that attracted international attention.



Reuters

Vanunu at pro-Palestinian rights rally in Israel, 1985. Sign reads: "Israel-Palestine: Two States for Two Peoples."

Mordechai Vanunu's official release date is April 22, 2004. His spirits are excellent. He remains unrepentant and committed to global nuclear disarmament. He plans to leave Israel as soon as possible and settle in the U.S. That may be easier said than done. The international campaign is doing everything it can to ensure it happens. For much more information and what you can do, contact the U.S. Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu, www.nonviolence.org/vanunu, (520) 323-8697. You can also write to him. The address is Mordechai Vanunu, Ashkelon Prison, Ashkelon, Israel.

New York Transit Ruling

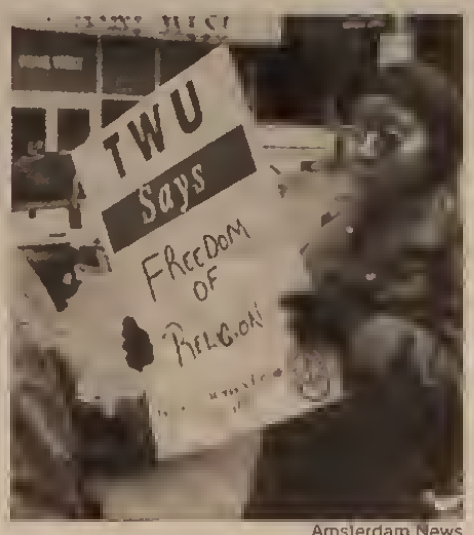
Muslim Women Banned from Work in Public

This October, an arbitrator upheld a New York City Transit (NYCT) ruling that three black Muslim bus drivers must either violate their religious convictions, or be banned from public work. NYCT launched its crackdown on these workers for wearing their Islamic headscarves in the summer of 2002, when the anti-Muslim "terror" hysteria was in full swing. The arbitrator's ruling, which mandates that these women wear official company caps on top of their headscarves in violation of Islamic teaching, constitutes an attack on New York's bus drivers and their union, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, because it asserts that the NYCT can remove Muslim workers from their jobs. This is an outrage! We defend these women. Union action should be organized to have them immediately reinstated to their original jobs and to fight the NYCT's racist anti-Muslim attacks. A union leadership that defends its members would have led a walkout on the spot when supervisors first victimized these union sisters.

Two of the victimized unionists, Stephanie Lewis and Deirdre Small, had worn their headscarves (also known as *khimars*) while driving city buses since 1989 and 1998, respectively, without incident. A third, Malikah Alkebulan, was a probationary bus driver in March 2002 when the Flatbush Depot bosses began disciplining her for not wearing an official company cap over her headscarf. Recently, another Muslim bus driver, Gladys Muhammad, came forward to protest being pulled from passenger service for the same reason. All four workers are reportedly pursuing lawsuits against the NYCT.

These attacks are part of the domestic "war on terror" launched after the criminal September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. The "war on terror" targets in the first instance immigrants and Muslims; it feeds the fire of anti-Muslim bigotry; racist attacks were particularly directed at Muslim women wearing the headscarf after September 11. Now, the "war on terror" is being used to go after just about anyone perceived as an opponent by the racist capitalist rulers, such as those who are opposed to the colonial war and occupation of Iraq. NYCT bosses are going after black Muslim women right now, but TWU members better know that it's the entire union and workers movement that's ultimately under fire. Blatant racism against immigrant and other minority workers by NYCT management has been on the rise. However, Lewis, Small, Alkebulan, Muhammad and other victimized transit workers are not simply helpless. They are members of TWU Local 100, a diverse, multiracial 36,000-strong union that has the ability to mobilize thousands of its members in their defense.

Local 100 officers correctly point to post-9/11 religious bigotry as the backdrop of this case, and the union held a demonstration on February 28 before an arbitration hearing. However, appealing to the spirit of "national unity" patriotism, the union issued a leaflet to the bus drivers with the main slogan of "Religious Discrimination Is Un-American!" Religious discrimination and racism—as the roundups of thousands of Arab Americans and immigrants have shown—is as American as apple pie. The union tops promote "national unity" as an act of loyalty to U.S. imperialism and the capitalists' political parties, especially the Democrats. An example of this was in Local 100's recent union elections, where not a single candidate or slate even mentioned this case as a priority for beating back the NYCT's anti-union assaults on this heavily immigrant and minority workforce. The TWU should not only give full support to the bus drivers' legal challenges against the company; it should also intensify its protests and stage union-wide job actions to get their jobs back and fight for their rights!



Amsterdam News

February 28: Stephanie Lewis, one of the bus drivers victimized for wearing Islamic headscarf, at union protest at arbitration hearing.

As Marxists, we defend the right to freedom of religious beliefs. At the same time, as we wrote in "New York TWU: Fight MTA Attacks on Muslim Women Workers" (*WV* No. 799, 14 March), "We recognize that the headscarf prescribed by the Koran—most obviously in its extreme forms, like the head-to-toe *chador* in Iran and the *burqa* in Afghanistan—is an expression of the subjugation of women, who are oppressed by *all* religions. But in post-9/11 America, it's the capitalists and their government that are making life hell for all Muslims, including women."

The arbitrator's latest decision gives a green light for more crackdowns on workers, including Sikhs, men who wear skullcaps or yarmulkes and *anyone else* who doesn't "look right" to the boss. There is nothing "neutral" about the capitalist courts and the system of arbitration in disputes between labor and management—these are institutions set up to maintain the bosses' system of exploitation and oppression. In fact, the company now has an excuse to never hire another Muslim woman who wears a headscarf as a bus operator, train operator, token booth clerk or many other jobs. ***The full power of TWU Local 100 should be used to stop this and all company acts of bigotry!*** ■

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the Democratic Party.

Gore Vidal said there's one party in the U.S., the property party, and it has two right wings. The Democrats run this system in partnership with the Republicans. It was Clinton who, among many other things, rammed through Congress the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, which opened the door to the Patriot Act and under which most of the immigrants held by the government today are detained. We stand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants who have made it to this country.

Perhaps because both parties are so right wing, some garden-variety liberals are now calling themselves Greens. Matt Gonzalez, running for San Francisco mayor, is a case in point. But the Greens, too, are a capitalist party with a capitalist program. The Nader campaign had a strong component of flag-waving anti-immigrant protectionism and strident anti-Communist China-bashing. The reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) is busy supporting Gonzalez, as they did Nader, although they do have a complaint—that Gonzalez supported the arrests of thousands of demonstrators in S.F. after the bombing of Iraq started. But they're not letting this minor point stand in the way of their support. This tells you a lot about not only Matt Gonzalez, but also the ISO.

In conclusion: We seek to educate the working class in the historic necessity for all mankind of the reorganization of society on the basis of a planned economy where production is based on human need, not profit. We seek to convince workers and their allies to build a workers party which will fight for a socialist future. We seek to act, as Lenin described the role of the vanguard party, as a tribune of the people. Where there is a workers strike, we'll be there; where there is protest against the injustices of the capitalist class against blacks, immigrants and the oppressed, we'll be there. As Rosa Luxemburg said long ago, the choices are clear—socialism or barbarism! We have a whole world to win. Workers of the world, unite!

Jido Cooper, Labor Black League for Social Defense

The Labor Black League for Social Defense, fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, stands for mobilizing black and working people in militant, integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America.

The war against "terrorism" is in fact a war against oppressed peoples abroad and working people, blacks and immigrants at home. While backing the $87 billion war budget for the colonial occupation of Iraq, the Democrats have demanded *more* of your tax dollars for repressing you right here in the so-called "homeland."

Last April, Congresswoman Barbara Lee led a rally in Oakland to channel anger against the Iraq war into support for the Democratic Party. Labor Black League members were there to say: "Break with the Democrats! We need to build our own workers party!" We pointed to our united-front demonstration in Oakland the previous year, to show what a workers party in action looks like—mobilizing the power of organized labor in defense of immigrants, blacks and the unions against the Patriot and Maritime Security Acts, independently of the capitalist parties and their state.

Cops kept a very low profile at the Lee rally. But you look at two days later, when antiwar activists took their protest down to the docks, just symbolically touching the question of labor's social power, and the cops moved in with guns blazing, seriously injuring both demonstrators and longshoremen with wooden projectiles.

So after that attack, liberals and reformists demanded a city council review of the police violence. Well, the existing civilian review board was bypassed, you see. There's no surprise there. It proved totally worthless regarding the [Oakland police] "Riders" reign of terror, just as its sister body has regarding SFPD brutality. Anyway, their so-called "independent inquiry" disappeared before starting. And what about the courts? Well, they turned the Riders loose, and they're prosecuting the *victims* of the cop rampage down at the docks. In the name of the "war on drugs," the Oakland and San Francisco cops continue to terrorize ghettos, barrios and workplaces. Labor Black League members took part in many of the recent protests against police brutality to say, "No illusions in civilian review boards or community control of police. Down with the racist and anti-labor 'war on drugs'! For the decriminalization of drugs!" These are among the demands added to our Ten-Point Program in an update adopted early last year.

Last year, together with the Spartacus Youth Club, we counter-demonstrated against gay-bashing pickets of memorials for murdered transgender youth Gwen Araujo. The bourgeoisie and their state use religion to help control the masses. That's why we added "Defend the separation of church and state!" to our demands in the Ten-Point Program for "Full democratic rights for homosexuals!" and "Government out of the bedroom!"

The imperialists have intensified their drive to restore capitalism in the deformed workers states of China, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea. We call for the international working class to defend the remaining gains of those countries' anti-capitalist social revolutions. They must be defended not only from imperialist military attack and economic pressure, but also from their treacherous Stalinist bureaucracies who aid the forces of capitalist restoration. So our Ten-Point Program now calls for the workers themselves in those countries to oust the bureaucracies through proletarian political revolution.

During its 20 years of activity, the Bay Area Labor Black League has helped build numerous actions to stop the KKK and Nazis, to defend civil and union rights for blacks and immigrants, and to defend abortion rights. You can see some of those activities represented in the displays around the room. So pick up a copy of our newsletter. Look over our Ten-Point Program. And if you agree with it, join the Labor Black League to fight racist capitalist oppression and to help build the party that can lead the working class to state power and to a socialist future. ■

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Cuba...

(continued from page 1)

rapacious imperialists. In the neocolonial countries, the only road to the resolution of the burning democratic tasks is the conquest of power by the working class, at the head of the peasantry and all the oppressed, and the extension of the revolution to the imperialist heartlands and beyond.

The RT also fought for revolutionary intervention into the mass civil rights movement in the U.S. South on a program of revolutionary integrationism, which holds that black people in the United States can have social and political equality only through the overthrow of the capitalist system and the forging of a workers state. This position was in opposition to the SWP leadership's tailing of the reformist Martin Luther King Jr. leadership of the civil rights movement and later of black nationalism.

Trotsky said correctly that those who cannot defend existing gains will never win new ones. I want to talk a little about the gains of the Cuban Revolution. Prior to the 1959 Revolution the immensely corrupt and brutal U.S. puppet regime of Batista and his cronies ruled over a society marked by mass unemployment and illiteracy, with miserable urban slums and a destitute rural population squeaking by through seasonal employment. On top of this was the systematic and brutal oppression of black people; indeed, heavily black Santiago province was a center of guerrilla struggle against Batista. Such is the Cuban "democracy" upheld by the anti-Communist rabble in Miami today.

AP

Members of the Cuban women's antiaircraft unit prepare to leave Angola, 1989. Cuban forces smashed South African apartheid invasion in mid 1970s.

Wide World

Camera Press

Left: Cuban militiaman guards U.S. oil refinery expropriated in 1960. Above: Soviet tanker unloads oil at Havana refinery formerly owned by Exxon. Soviet Union provided vital support for Cuban deformed workers state.

Following the overthrow of capitalism in 1960-61, the resources of Cuban society—with heavy Soviet aid—were invested in a centralized, planned economy, with everyone guaranteed a job, decent housing, food and education. The free health care system, despite the crippling effects of the U.S. blockade, is still far and away the best among so-called "Third World" countries, and Cuban medical schools train doctors from countries like Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Cubans now enjoy one of the highest literacy rates in the world, and nearly one in eleven hold university degrees. The island has more doctors and teachers per capita than just about any country in the world.

The revolution especially benefited women. The influence of the Catholic church was broken. Abortion is a free health service, and the birthrate is only 1.5 per woman, more typical of rich countries. Prenatal care is a high priority, which has contributed to an infant mortality rate lower than in parts of the "First World." One of the first acts of the Castro regime was to outlaw racist discrimination—one reason why black Cubans are especially hostile to the predominantly white *gusanos* (worms) in Miami, who since fleeing Cuba have been a bulwark of racist bourgeois politics in South Florida. And black people in Florida and Haiti and New York know this too!

Counterrevolution in USSR: A World-Historic Defeat

Now, as internationalists we have to talk about the international context in which we think Cuba must be viewed. For anyone who reads the daily newspapers and is not a hopeless bourgeois ideologue or anti-Communist leftist of the stripe of the International Socialist Organization (ISO), Socialist Action, the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) and such like, it is clear that since 1991-92 the world situation has changed enormously for the worse; that is, the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union led by Boris Yeltsin and Bush Sr. was an unparalleled defeat for the international working class and the colonial and ex-colonial peoples of the world.

Despite the Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration, the Soviet Union was the industrial and military powerhouse protecting every other country that had overthrown capitalist rule, from China to North Korea to Vietnam to Cuba. It was only fear of possible Soviet retaliation that held American imperialism back from using nuclear weapons against North Korea and China in the Korean War of the early 1950s and against North Vietnam in the 1960s. And now the Soviet Union is gone, sold out thanks to decades of Stalinist betrayal. Another result of the counterrevolution is that the nominally independent countries of the Third World can no longer maneuver between the "two superpowers"; the American imperialists think they can do anything to anyone and get away with it. The bombing of Serbia back in 1999 by the Democratic Clinton administration was one example. The current U.S. mass slaughter in Iraq—following the 1991 Gulf War massacre and 12 years of a United Nations starvation blockade which resulted in the deaths of one and a half million Iraqis—and the ensuing colonial occupation today is another. The world has become a very dangerous, and for untold millions a very desperate place.

Further, the destruction of the Soviet Union has inflamed the rivalries between the imperialist states of North America, West Europe and Japan, whose conflicts of interest are no longer restrained by their capitalist rulers' shared commitment to the former anti-Soviet alliance. Current tensions between French and German imperialism on the one hand and U.S. imperialism on the other over how to divide up the spoils in Iraq are indicators of this. All the imperialist powers have ratcheted up their exploitation of the Third World countries and their own working classes. And not least, there has been catastrophic destruction within the former Soviet Union itself. The ICL intervened in East Germany and the USSR in the late 1980s and early '90s to fight for workers political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies, whose appeasement of capitalist imperialism opened the door to the final undoing of the deformed workers states. Meanwhile the rest of the left howled with the imperialist wolves about the victory of "democracy"—i.e., bourgeois democracy—the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie being restored to the land of the great October 1917 Revolution and strengthened throughout the world.

The imperialists in general and American imperialism in particular are making it their business to destroy the remaining deformed workers states on the planet—China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba—through a policy of economic strangulation and military pressure. They are also trying to regain these areas of the globe for capitalist exploitation through "free market" economic incursions into the deformed workers states, a policy of counterrevolution through "constructive engagement" which is applied to China and hotly debated by the U.S. rulers with regard to Cuba. It is emblematic of the American imperialists' fury toward any part of the world that was ripped out of the capitalist system that, having won the Cold War against the Soviet Union, they now target the deformed workers states of North Korea, China and Cuba for a potential nuclear first strike in the Pentagon's "Nuclear Posture Review"—that is, nuclear irradiation of hundreds of millions of people.

We are for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. The imperialists are exercised by the North Korean nuclear program; we defend the right of the deformed workers states to have nuclear weapons. In today's world, it's about the only guarantee of national sovereignty—just look at the different reactions of the Pentagon to North Korea and Iraq! And we think that a key element of defense of the deformed workers states is not only to defend the gains of the revolutions but to complete them and extend them internationally.

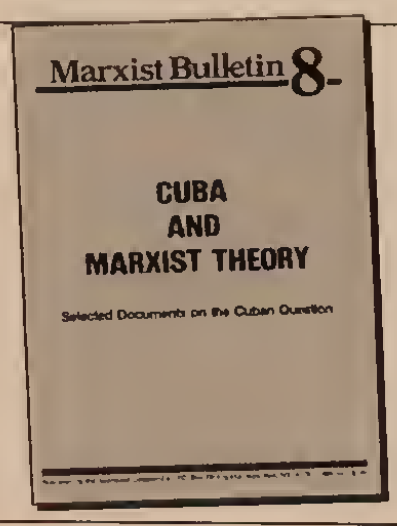
Defend Cuba Against U.S. Imperialism!

Since the Cuban Revolution led to the establishment of a deformed workers state, it has been an article of faith of the American imperialist administrations, from Democratic president "Bay of Pigs" Kennedy to Republican Bush Jr. today, that the gains of that revolution must be destroyed utterly. Bush's administration is rife with *gusanos*, such as presidential envoy to the Americas Otto Reich. Other prominent members of the Bush team include John Negroponte and Elliott Abrams, who in the 1980s directed the CIA-backed *contra* terrorists in Nicaragua and the death squad regime in El Salvador.

They have tried from day one to destroy the Cuban Revolution. You had the Kennedy/CIA-engineered 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, numerous assassination attempts against Castro, and an economic embargo which has now been in place for over 40 years. For more than three decades, the biggest obstacle to Washington's drive for capitalist restoration in Cuba was the Soviet Union, which gave Cuba some $4 billion a year in aid and provided a crucial military shield against imperialism. In the wake of the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, the imperialist rulers see their big chance to bury the Cuban Revolution once and for all.

At the same time, many U.S. corporations that seek to compete with capitalists from West Europe and Canada in exploiting Cuba have long pressured the U.S. government to ease restrictions and loosen the 44-year economic embargo. Representative of this imperialist policy of "constructive engagement" was last year's visit to Cuba by former Democratic president Jimmy Carter.

"Human rights" Carter is in reality a Southern peanut farmer who, during his presidency, had "ethnic purity" on his mind for U.S. policy at home and the destruction of workers states internationally—and he has not changed his spots. Carter led Cold War II, a drive for counterrevolution which raged with the Soviet intervention into Afghanistan in 1979. We Trotskyists supported the action by the Moscow Stalinists, for once solidly on the



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Selected Documents on the Cuban Question, 1960-1966

The light of the Revolutionary Tendency in the Socialist Workers Party and the development of the Spartacist League's characterization of Castro's Cuba as a deformed workers state. Includes preface from 1973.

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side of social progress against the CIA and their cutthroat Islamic fundamentalists. We said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend the gains of October to the Afghan peoples!"

Carter's visit to Cuba was timed to coincide with a propaganda campaign known as the Varela petition campaign. The supporters of that campaign form the bulk of those imprisoned by the Cuban government in April of this year. In addition to calling for freedom of expression and association, the Varela petition also demands "free elections and the right to private enterprise"—demands that amount to a call for "democratic" counterrevolution, the "electoral" rise to power of capitalist-restorationist forces financed by American imperialist largesse, which would be accompanied by a bloodbath of workers and Communists. Yet Carter was welcomed by Castro and offered a platform on Cuban TV and radio to spew his imperialist propaganda.

The Varela project was named after a 19th-century Cuban priest. It was launched around the time of the 1998 visit by Pope John Paul II to Cuba—again with Castro's blessing. It is led by the head of the "Christian Liberation Movement," Oswaldo Payá, and supported and funded by the U.S. State Department, the National Endowment for Democracy and the Catholic church. The U.S. impe-

Harvey/Magnum

Cuba's Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology is a leading interferon producer. Planned and collectivized economy enables Cuba to be in forefront of medical developments.

rialists see Varela as a Cuban version of the counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność movement, as the *Washington Post* (13 January) made clear in the feature on Payá headlined "Solidarity, Cuban-Style." The Castro bureaucracy's policy of appeasement of imperialism and the Catholic church is deadly dangerous. Come to think of it, some of the noise recently emanating from the social democrats and liberals about Cuba is reminiscent of their performance as "left" spokesmen for counterrevolution in the period of the rise of Solidarność.

On the heels of the colonial invasion and occupation of Iraq, the imperialist regime in Washington has intensified its decades-long counterrevolutionary crusade against Cuba. Seizing on the trials and convictions this April of 78 Cuban "dissidents," most of whom were apparently working with James Cason, head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, Colin Powell raged that Cuba is an "aberration in the Western hemisphere." The U.S. expelled 14 Cuban diplomats, canceled all educational travel to Cuba and is threatening to cut off family remittances to Cuba that amount to as much as $1 billion a year.

And, while the imperialists raised a hue and cry over the arrests in Cuba, they have carried out their own campaign against defenders of Cuba in the U.S. A case in point is the Miami Five, who have been sentenced to 15 years to life for the "crime" of monitoring the terrorist activities of *gusanos*. Free the Miami Five now!

Taking their cue from "democratic" imperialists like Carter, a wide array of "left" liberals and trade-union bureaucrats in the U.S. and internationally have

Time

AP

Havana market has empty shelves, while those who hold U.S. currency shop at special "dollar store." Castro bureaucracy's introduction of the dollar into Cuban economy has sharply increased social inequality.

circulated a petition which denounces Castro's crackdown as "brute repression" and says not one word about the U.S. invasion of Iraq or the so-called "war on terror" against immigrants, blacks and workers in the U.S. This petition was circulated by United Federation of Teachers official and Democratic Socialists of America member Leo Casey, and supported by Stanley Aronowitz and Bogdan Denitch, as well as *Nation* types like Katha Pollitt and Todd Gitlin.

For those who were squeamish about signing such an outright statement of support to the Bush regime, there was another petition circulated by the Campaign for Peace and Democracy, signed by Howard Zinn, Cornel West and all-purpose anti-Communist Noam Chomsky. The petition criticizes U.S. policy toward Cuba and Iraq but states, "We support civil liberties and democratic rights everywhere, regardless of the country's economic, political or social system.... We support democracy in Cuba. The imprisonment of people for attempting to exercise their rights of free expression is outrageous and unacceptable." The principal author and promoter of this petition in the U.S. was Joanne Landy, a social democrat and lifelong enemy of the Chinese, Vietnamese and Cuban Revolutions and member of the Council on Foreign Relations, one of the major institutions advising the U.S. government on its imperial policies for over half a century.

For the record, it should also be noted that Joanne Landy is a former member of the International Socialists, which spawned the ISO and Sy Landy's LRP, which are also hostile to the Cuban Revolution. For these outfits, the abstract notion of "democracy" and not the proletarian class character of the Cuban state is the be-all and end-all. These groups are horrified by the overthrow of capitalist class rule.

I would note while we're on the subject that in May 2003, as part of its crackdown, the Castro government executed three boat hijackers. Unlike Workers World Party and the Socialist Workers Party, for whom Castro can do no wrong, we are Marxists. We do not condone the executions, though we support those measures that are taken in defense of the gains of the Cuban Revolution, including the imprisonment of "dissidents" who are actively collaborating with U.S. imperialism. Marxists—including the Bolsheviks—are in principle opposed to the barbaric death penalty being part of the juridical code of any state.

For Workers Political Revolution in Cuba!

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, which had accounted for 85 percent of Cuba's trade, Cuba entered a period of grave economic crisis. In particular, the Soviet Union supplied oil at below-market prices, and without oil there is not much basis for an industrial economy. The Castro bureaucracy dubbed it a "Special Period in Time of Peace," i.e., Cuba suffers degrees of scarcity and hardship like a country at war. The government's official figure in the mid 1990s was that the economy declined 34 percent from 1991 to 1994. Housing is cramped and deteriorating. Public transportation is dying for lack of new parts, including for maintenance. In the countryside, the tractor is not the norm, but rather carts drawn by various beasts of burden.

There are "friends of Cuba" like the eccentric Socialist Workers Party and Workers World Party who would like us to think Cuba is socialist. But as Karl Marx said, the attainment of socialism—a society of such material abundance that classes no longer exist—requires the victory of proletarian revolution in at least several of the advanced capitalist countries in order to create an international planned economy based on the highest material and technological development.

The reactions of the Castro government to the imperialist pressure have not been that of a revolutionary socialist regime but of a nationalist bureaucratic caste in isolation. In 1994 the regime introduced market measures including joint ventures with foreign companies, cooperatives in the agricultural sector and legalization of markets for agricultural products and in service sectors. The bureaucracy also legalized the holding and exchange of U.S. currency, a "dollarization" of the economy which has led to sharp and growing income differentials hitting women and black Cubans the hardest.

According to the *NACLA Report on the Americas* (March/April 1999), sales in U.S. dollars accounted for 54 percent of Cuba's total domestic retail sales. Over $800 million a year flows into Cuba from the U.S., but black Cubans, whose relatives are not rich Miamians, are far less likely to receive these dollars. The growth of inequality and the danger of the encroaching free market to the planned economy can be seen in the tourist industry, which has surpassed sugar exports as the primary source of foreign exchange. In 1998, the Cuban government invested over $500 million in tourism, as opposed to $49 million for the foodstuffs industry and $37 million in the steel and metals sector. And the rise in prostitution at the edge of the tourist industry represents serious deterioration of the gains of the revolution. And it's getting worse, not better.

Cuba needs an internationalist Trotskyist party. Such a party would fight to defend and improve the living conditions of the proletariat, would fight the inequalities brought on by the bureaucracy's dollarization of the economy, would fight the tendency toward privatization in the agricultural section. Such a party would act as the tribune of the people, i.e., fight all racial and sexual discrimination in order to defend the rights of blacks, women and homosexuals. And such a party would fight to inculcate in the consciousness of the Cuban working class the need for political revolution to oust the bureaucracy, to establish the rule of workers councils, and to fight for socialist revolution throughout the Americas, without which the Cuban Revolution cannot long survive in the post-Soviet world.

The Russian Revolution and the Young Soviet Republic

Now, I want to talk about the question: What is a deformed workers state? To understand that you have to understand what a healthy workers state is, that is, Soviet Russia under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party.

It is necessary to understand the origins of the Soviet Union in the October 1917 Revolution, led by the Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky, and its subsequent bureaucratic degeneration under J.V. Stalin and his heirs.

Comrade Victor Gibbons explained this very powerfully in a forum published in *WV* (see "Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union," *WV* Nos. 809 and 810, 12 and 26 September). The October 1917 Revolution arose out of the struggle against the imperialist slaughter of the First World War. It was the signal act of the 20th century, which Lenin described as the epoch of imperialist decay and socialist revolution. It took the question of socialist revolution out of the realm of theory and made it real in the former Russian tsarist empire.

The October Revolution created a workers state based on workers councils and roused the toilers to forge a Red Army that triumphed in a three-year-long Civil War against the counterrevolutionary White forces and the expeditionary forces of nearly every major imperialist power. The Soviet government of Lenin and Trotsky expropriated both the Russian capitalist and Western imperialist holdings and repudiated outright Russia's massive debt to foreign bankers. It proclaimed the right of working people

continued on page 10

Viktor Bulla

Putilov factory workers meeting for re-election of Petrograd Soviet, 1920. Russian Revolution put political power in hands of proletariat.

Cuba...

(continued from page 9)

to jobs, health, housing and education, and took the first steps to building a socialist society.

As comrade Gibbons explained:

> "The revolutionary government gave land to the peasants and self-determination to the many oppressed nations (themselves largely made up of peasants) of the former tsarist empire.... The early Soviet government not only separated church and state, it poured funds into secular education and science, promoting a thoroughly materialist worldview. It eliminated all laws discriminating against national and ethnic minorities and women. Soviet Russia eliminated all discriminatory laws, including against homosexuals. Soviet Russia was the first country of significance to give the vote to women, causing the Western capitalist 'democracies' (e.g., the United States and Britain) to scramble to catch up."

The proletarian revolution led by the Bolshevik Party in Russia was not made solely for Russia. For revolutionary Marxists, the Russian Revolution was seen as the opening shot of a necessarily international struggle of labor against the rule of capital. Lenin's Bolsheviks broke the capitalist chain at its weakest link, understanding that unless the proletarian revolution was extended to the major capitalist powers, most immediately Germany, an isolated dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia could not long survive.

Sygma

Castro with Nicaraguan leader, Daniel Ortega. Committed to "socialism in one country," Castro advised Sandinistas not to create "another Cuba."

The Bolsheviks launched the Communist International, which by 1921 had attracted six million workers to its banner, and trained workers around the world in the program and strategy of revolutionary struggle. To give just one example: in the relatively politically backward U.S.A., it was the leaders of the Russian Revolution who made the important connection between the fight for black liberation and workers revolution.

The opportunities were manifold, but the new revolutionary parties outside Russia were too new, that is, too weak and politically immature, to realize them. In Europe, especially Germany, the Social Democracy served its bourgeois masters, helping restabilize the bourgeois order and joining with the capitalists in their hostility to the October Revolution. Elsewhere, in less-developed nations and regions, the main ideological obstacle and force against Bolshevism was nationalism.

The pressure of imperialist encirclement, the devastation of the Russian working class in the Civil War and the lengthy isolation of the Russian Revolution enabled a bureaucratic layer headed by Stalin to usurp political power from the proletariat in a political counterrevolution in 1923-24. Over the following decade, Stalin proceeded to consolidate bureaucratic rule in the USSR. While resting on and deriving its privileges from the proletarian property forms of the Soviet state, the Stalinist bureaucracy was not irrevocably committed to their defense. From 1924 on, the people who ruled the Soviet Union, the way that they ruled, and the reasons for which they ruled changed qualitatively. The program of proletarian internationalism and workers democracy was replaced by the rule of a nationalist petty-bourgeois caste, headed by Stalin. Stalin's "theory" of "socialism in one country," expressing the nationally limited interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy, utopian and anti-internationalist, turned the Communist International from an instrument of the world revolution into a new obstacle, which betrayed other workers struggles on the altar of peaceful coexistence with imperialism.

In opposition to Stalin's nationalist opportunism, Trotsky's Left Opposition was founded on the program of authentic Marxism which animated the Bolshevik Revolution. The Left Opposition fought to preserve and extend the gains of the Russian Revolution which had been betrayed but not yet overthrown. It fought for a return to the road of Leninist internationalism.

The Birth of the Cuban Deformed Workers State

Cuba is a *deformed* workers state, a qualitatively different item from a healthy workers state. On January 1, 1959 the petty-bourgeois guerrilla army led by the July 26 Movement of Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and others overthrew the corrupt, racist regime of Fulgencio Batista. The Batista regime was hated by the Cuban masses and increasingly viewed as an embarrassment by the upper layers of Cuban society, many of whom backed Castro against the avaricious dictator and his cronies, who were robbing the country blind. So the imperialist overlords in Washington let Batista fall, and his supporters fled in their yachts to Miami with suitcases full of money.

The Castro regime which took power in 1959 had no intention of a break with, much less expropriation of, the Cuban bourgeoisie. In the tradition of so many Latin American fighters for national liberation from the yoke of Yankee domination, Castro and Guevara were at the time essentially liberal democrats with guns. Indeed, the political program of the July 26 Movement was simply a call for the return of the 1940 constitution, and Castro himself ran for office on the liberal bourgeois Ortodoxo party ticket in 1952.

Castro formed a coalition government with bourgeois forces and pledged to protect their interests. At the same time, the program of land redistribution and the revolutionary justice meted out to Batista's former police torturers scared Castro's own bourgeois supporters. Nor was this popular with Eisenhower's CIA director Allen Dulles, or his Secretary of State brother, John Foster Dulles, who were both major stockholders of the United Fruit Company.

Despite overtures by Castro to appease the United States, Eisenhower tried to bring Cuba's radical petty-bourgeois democrats to heel through brute economic pressure. Castro responded with sweeping nationalizations of the U.S.-owned sugar plantations, banks and other firms, and by accepting the aid offered by the Soviet Union. By early 1961, the holdings of National City Bank, United Fruit, Standard Oil, the sugar barons and the Mafia—as well as the Cuban bourgeoisie—had been expropriated and the Cuban capitalists were either in exile or prison.

Glinn/Magnum

Castro's rebel forces enter Havana, New Year's Day 1959.

How did petty-bourgeois insurrectionary peasant armies come to create deformed workers states? The cadre who went on to forge the Spartacist League made an important theoretical breakthrough for Marxism in analyzing the Cuban Revolution and showing how a petty-bourgeois movement, under exceptional circumstances—the absence of the working class as a contender for social power in its own right, the flight of the national bourgeoisie and hostile imperialist encirclement, and a life line thrown by the Soviet Union—could overthrow the old Batista dictatorship and eventually smash capitalist property relations. As stated in the ICL "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* No. 54 [English-language edition], Spring 1998):

> "Under the most *favorable* historic circumstances conceivable, the petty-bourgeois peasantry was only capable of creating a bureaucratically deformed workers state, that is, a state of the same order as that issuing out of the political counterrevolution of Stalin in the Soviet Union, an anti-working-class regime which blocked the possibilities to extend social revolution into Latin America and North America, and suppressed Cuba's further development in the direction of socialism. To place the working class in political power and open the road to socialist development requires a supplemental *political* revolution led by a Trotskyist party. With the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and consequently no readily available lifeline against imperialist encirclement, the narrow historical opening in which petty-bourgeois forces were able to overturn local capitalist rule has been closed, underscoring the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution."

For Socialist Revolution Throughout the Americas!

Ultimately, the only alternative to capitalist counterrevolution is international socialist revolution, which has never been Castro's perspective. When Castro proclaimed the revolution "socialist" at the time of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, he adopted not the Marxist program of international revolution but the Stalinist "theory" of "socialism in one country," the corollary of which is a policy of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. Che Guevara expressed this policy clearly in his 1964 speech to the United Nations where he called for "peaceful coexistence between states with different economic and social systems."

In the early 1970s Castro supported the popular-front capitalist government of Salvador Allende, which disarmed the militant Chilean working class and ultimately led to the 1973 bloodbath resulting from Pinochet's bloody coup. During the 1980s Central America was riven by popular revolutionary struggles. But in El Salvador Castro supported the FMLN guerrillas' call for a "negotiated settlement" with the bloody U.S.-backed military junta, a program which resulted in the disarming of the leftist guerrillas and restabilization of capitalist rule. And in Nicaragua, Castro counseled the radical-nationalist Sandinistas not to take the "Cuban road," i.e., not to antagonize the imperialists by expropriating the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie. The Sandinistas were eventually toppled and replaced by the U.S.-backed *contra* reactionaries.

What is urgently necessary is new October Revolutions. It is the task of the International Communist League to fight to forge the Trotskyist parties to lead the struggle for revolution throughout the Americas, to link the defense of the Cuban Revolution with the fight of the powerful proletariat of Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela and Mexico and with the fight for workers revolution here in the belly of the imperialist beast. Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México fight to build a revolutionary workers party in Mexico. In the U.S., we in the SL fight to build a workers party which brings to the proletariat the understanding that the defense of the Cuban Revolution is an integral part of its struggle against the American capitalist exploiters.

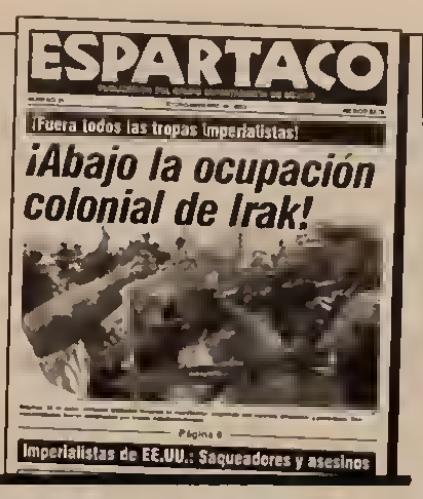
Key to this struggle in Latin America is the fight against nationalism and for the political independence of the proletariat and its struggles. It is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution that provides the link between working people and the oppressed in the U.S. and the working masses of Mexico and Latin America.

In the U.S., the fight for workers power means politically combatting the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy whose instrument, the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (and, formerly, the American Institute for Free Labor Development), has been involved in every bloody anti-working-class coup throughout Latin America. It means breaking the working class from the Democratic and Republican parties of capitalist rule and the forging of a revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As was stated in one of the Fourth International's founding documents, the 1938 "Theses on the World Role of American Imperialism":

> "None of the countries of Latin America or the Pacific which are now under the domination of American imperialism to one degree or another is able either to attain complete freedom from foreign oppression or to retain such freedom for any length of time if it confines its struggle to the efforts of its own self. Only a union of the Latin American peoples, striving towards the goal of a united socialist America and allied in the struggle with the revolutionary proletariat of the United States, would present a force strong enough to contend successfully with North American imperialism."

That is the fight to which we are dedicated. For the rebirth of the Trotskyist Fourth International! For the international triumph of the world proletariat!■



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Hussein...

(continued from page 12)

28 March). ***All U.S. and imperialist troops out of Iraq now!***

In the fight against the imperialist military occupation of Iraq, it is crucial to maintain front and center the call to ***defend the Palestinian people!*** With the Iraq war at center stage, the Zionist rulers have tightened their choke hold on the Palestinians. The Sharon government is itself reveling in the capture of Hussein, who cynically manipulated the Palestinian cause to boost his standing among the Palestinian masses. ***Israel out of the Occupied Territories! Defend the Palestinian people!***

Meanwhile, Israeli commando units are training U.S. special forces in "preemptive manhunting"—a program of infiltration and assassination of civilian populations drawn from Israel's murderous experience in the West Bank and Gaza. Behind the facade of a tribunal drenched in rhetoric about "human rights," countless Iraqi civilians will be getting their doors kicked in by stormtroopers and machine-gunned dead. The American imperialist butchers made clear, yet again, the kind of "democracy" they have in mind for Iraq when U.S. troops yesterday fired into a protest in support of Hussein in a town west of Baghdad, killing three people.

George Bush and his British poodle Tony Blair will milk the capture of Hussein for everything they can to further their reactionary international and domestic agendas, targeting everyone from Irish opponents of British colonial rule to Muslim immigrants in the U.S. In this regard, it should be recalled that Bush's domestic "opposition," the Democratic Party, was gungho behind the Patriot Act that strips citizens of elementary democratic rights and rolls back hard-fought gains for labor, blacks and immigrants under the rubric of "national security." If the Democrats appear to be a weak domestic opposition, it may be observed that their arms are surely weary from flag-waving and saluting their commander in chief. The tepid Democratic opposition to the war was argued on the basis that it detracted from the "war on terror." To a man, every Democratic Party presidential candidate dutifully welcomed the capture of Saddam Hussein. When a Democratic politician like "antiwar" presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich calls to "end the occupation of Iraq," his purpose is to corral mounting domestic opposition to the war into the fold of the Democratic Party, the other capitalist party of war and racism. Neither in domestic nor foreign policy do the Democrats represent any alternative to Bush because they represent the same class interests of the capitalist rulers. We say: ***Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party!***

European rulers and American liberals uneasy with the Bush doctrine of unilateral "pre-emptive war" to remap the globe in American self-interest salute the capture of Hussein while urging that the United Nations run the war crimes tribunal. Disgruntled with being left out of lucrative contracts to "rebuild" Iraq, the European rulers want the UN to oversee the division of the spoils. We say, ***no illusions in the United Nations!*** Twelve years of UN sanctions against Iraq killed over one and a half million Iraqi civilians while UN weapons inspections set up Iraq for the American kill. And let it not be forgotten that it was the UN "den of thieves" that exempted the American military from international war crimes tribunals!

American workers and minorities are crucial in the struggle against a U.S. "evil empire" which imposes "democracy" through military occupation, terror and destruction. The patriotic hoopla is wearing thin as the Iraqi insurgency strikes blows every day against the American forces. Workers rights are being eroded in a lousy economy, black youth are being purged from higher education with attacks on affirmative action, civil liberties are being shredded—there is accumulating social tinder which could explode. The key is to organize these discontents around a class-struggle program and against the trade-union misleaders and liberal lefts who tie the workers and oppressed to their class enemy in the Democratic Party.

We in the Spartacist League are dedicated to the task of forging a revolutionary leadership, a workers party like Lenin and Trotsky built, the party that led the workers to victory in the 1917 Russian Revolution. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 has created a more dangerous world of unbridled U.S. military aggression. We fight to build the workers party that will bring the Russian Revolution back—to America and everywhere else around the world—through new October Revolutions! ***Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! U.S. and all imperialist forces out of Iraq now!*** ■

Arar...

(continued from page 12)

On October 5, the Canadian government finally secured Arar's release from imprisonment in Syria. The next day he arrived back in Canada, ending his 375-day ordeal. Arar of course renounced the lies he was forced to tell under torture and is struggling to get his life back. His family is currently living on welfare as Arar won't be able to return to his profession until he can clear his name.

Arar's ordeal was the result of the INS working with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to profile Arar as a terrorist. As our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada wrote in *Spartacist Canada* (No. 139, Winter 2003/2004): "If not for the dossier of information provided by Canadian security services that got him put on the U.S. 'Viper' watch list, Arar's transit through the U.S. last year might have been as uneventful as his many other recent trips there—his U.S. work permit had even been renewed post-9/11."

During his interrogation, the INS showed Arar a copy of his 1997 apartment lease which was witnessed and signed by Abdullah Almalki, another Canadian citizen whom Arar encountered during his imprisonment in Syria who was tortured even more severely than Arar. No one knows how many victims of the "anti-terror" witchhunt languish under such conditions, let alone how many have died. The ostensible link the RCMP drew between Abdullah Almalki and "terrorism" is the suspicion that his brother sells computer equipment to companies who in turn sell it to other companies and which eventually ends up in the hands of supposed "terrorists." Based on these criteria anyone that had a relative who sold as much as a box-cutter that eventually ended up in the hands of someone the FBI and RCMP regard as a terrorist could be stripped of all legal rights and treated like an "enemy combatant."

AP

Detainee from Afghanistan at notorious Camp X-Ray in Guantánamo Bay being taken for interrogation by military officials in 2002.

Defend Democratic Rights!

On November 11, Republicans and Democrats in the U.S. Senate voted for sanctions against Syria if its government fails to provide more "assistance" in the "war on terror." On December 12, President Bush signed the bill. The torture of Maher Arar is an example of the kind of "assistance" they're demanding more of. Commenting on the relationship between the U.S. government and the Syrian regime, the *Washington Post* (5 November) quotes the counterterrorism coordinator for the State Department, Cofer Black, as praising the "assistance" the Syrian government has provided on Al Qaeda. The U.S. in fact has established a policy of deporting suspects to countries where they expect them to be tortured. The policy is known as "extraordinary rendition." It was started in 1998 under the Clinton administration. In addition to Syria, the CIA now deports its victims to Jordan, Egypt and Morocco.

The ordeal inflicted on Arar by U.S. federal authorities is part of their never-ending global "war against terror." This so-called "war" has been used to excuse the denial of democratic rights to anyone this government suspects of posing a threat. The U.S. government is holding hundreds of prisoners at the American military base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. These prisoners, who include youths, are being deprived of the legal rights of "prisoners of war." Though a few have been released, those who remain have been denied any contact with lawyers and their families, a promised exception being made for a few British and Australian citizens. This treatment reflects what is done to prisoners by American-supported regimes ruled by dictators from the Near East to Africa and Latin America. ***We demand freedom for the Guantánamo detainees!***

Arar was treated like an "enemy combatant," a status which justifies being stripped of all democratic rights. In the "war against terror" American citizens, who supposedly are guaranteed their democratic rights under the Constitution, can have these rights stripped away as well.

Jose Padilla has been declared an "enemy combatant" and indefinitely imprisoned without charges, a hearing or representation by a lawyer. In an *amici curiae* brief filed by the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee, we state: "The Executive has imposed martial law on Jose Padilla, a citizen, on the pretext of an alleged 'war on terrorism' which is in fact not a military conflict but a political agenda. This is an unprecedented assertion of imperial powers by the President." The "war on terror" is no more a real shooting war than is a "war on evil" or "war on cancer."

The Democratic Party paved the way for Bush, and in fact most of the immigrants who have been detained since the September 11 attacks are being held under "anti-terrorism" laws enacted under Clinton. At the same time, measures like the USA-Patriot Act, which received bipartisan support, mark a qualitative diminution of democratic rights in the U.S.

What stands behind the "war on terror" and the attacks on democratic rights is the need by large sections of the bourgeoisie and their capitalist state to increase repressive control over the population, particularly working people, blacks and immigrants. These police-state measures were illustrated by the occupation of the black community of Benton Harbor, Michigan following an explosion of community rage over acts of deadly police brutality in June. Virtual martial law was imposed on the community, which was invaded by hundreds of cops in riot gear along with armored vehicles.

These measures are also designed to improve the government's ability to attack labor unions and bust strikes. Every democratic right working people and minorities enjoy today has been won through protracted and militant struggle. The current assault on these rights illustrates that without struggle these rights will be taken away.

The way to fight the continued evisceration of democratic rights and the kind of ordeal inflicted on Maher Arar was demonstrated in Oakland on 9 February 2002, when the Partisan Defense Committee and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense initiated a united-front protest against the Patriot and Maritime Security Acts. This demonstration brought together the struggles of immigrants, blacks and organized labor in opposition to the government's anti-immigrant hysteria. It is the multiracial labor movement, with its significant immigrant component, that has the social power to lead all the oppressed in a struggle against the government's repressive measures.

The fight to build a revolutionary workers party, independent of the Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism, is critical for mobilizing the power of labor against racist repression and in defense of immigrants as part of the struggle for a workers government. ***Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Down with the "war on terror"! Down with the USA-Patriot Act! Free the detainees!*** ■

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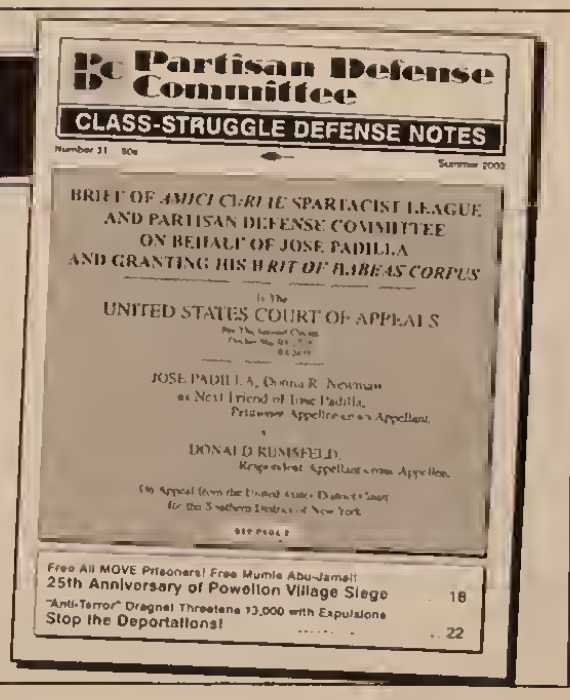

WORKERS VANGUARD

Imperialists Gloat over Capture of Former Henchman Saddam Hussein

Iraq: U.S. Occupiers Get Out Now!

DECEMBER 16—The architects of imperialist war and mass murder in the White House and Pentagon and 10 Downing Street hail the capture of Saddam Hussein as a great day for "world peace" and "justice" while they intensify their brutal war against the Iraqi people. Saddam Hussein was Washington's bloody bastard. He was Washington's close ally and client while he massacred tens of thousands of Kurdish people. He was a mainstay of U.S. imperialist policy in the Near East while he arrested, tortured and executed thousands of Iraqi Communists, workers' leaders, leftists, ethnic minorities and religious opponents, and waged eight years of bloody war with predominantly Shi'ite Iran. But when Hussein slipped his leash and made a grab for Kuwait in 1990, this former ally and flunkey for U.S. imperialism in the Near East became Washington's all-purpose bogeyman.

Now the main enemy of the world's working people, the U.S. imperialist state—which killed hundreds of thousands of Japanese in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which butchered over three million Koreans, which burned the flesh off Vietnamese villagers with napalm, which wreaked destruction in the former Yugoslavia in the 1999 war in the Balkans—just had its Iraqi stooges set up a tribunal which will likely try Saddam Hussein. This shameless hypocrisy should steel the resolve of all genuine fighters for social justice to sweep away the whole rotting system of imperialist capitalism and its lackeys and to create societies where those who labor rule. When workers tribunals of a victorious socialist revolution in the United States try America's capitalist exploiters for their crimes against the oppressed masses of the world, black America, labor, immigrants and the poor, and when Iraqi Kurds, leftists and workers rip the oil wealth out of the hands of the military occupiers and judge them and their former henchmen, *then* we can start talking about justice.

CNN

1983: Donald Rumsfeld, architect of murderous colonial war on Iraq, greets Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on behalf of Reagan administration. In 1980s, U.S. imperialists armed Hussein regime as key U.S. ally in Near East.

Despite the gloating, not even the Pentagon spokesmen pretend that the capture of Saddam Hussein will end the Iraqi insurgency. While presenting Saddam Hussein as their demonic poster boy and pretext for war, the bible-thumping Christian fundamentalist bigots running the brutal military occupation are waging war against the entire Iraqi people. In this conflict, *we have a side—with the Iraqi people against the imperialist occupiers!* This has been our forthright position from the beginning. With the onset of the U.S. rape of Iraq, the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League/U.S. issued a statement declaring: "It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe" (*WV* No. 800,

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Down With the "Anti-Terrorist" Witchhunt!

The Deportation, Detention and Torture of Maher Arar

On 26 September 2002 Syrian-born Canadian citizen Maher Arar was arrested by officials of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at New York's Kennedy Airport. Maher Arar, a 33-year-old telecommunications engineer, was on his way back to Canada after a family vacation in Tunisia and was waiting for his connecting flight when he was abducted by INS officials.

Arar was taken to a secluded area of Kennedy Airport and interrogated. His interrogators hurled insults and questions at him for hours while denying him the right to legal counsel. His requests to be sent back to his home in Canada were ignored. Instead he was taken to the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, where he was strip-searched. During his detention he again asked to be sent back to Canada and not Syria, where he feared being tortured. After confining Arar for over a week, U.S. authorities deported him to Syria, a country he had not set foot in for some 16 years.

He was beaten in the van that took him from Jordan to the Syrian prison where he was held. He was placed in a dark cell. In a moving description of his ordeal, Arar wrote in a piece published in the *Los Angeles Times* (10 December):

> "I describe my cell in Syria as a grave because it was just 3 feet wide, 6 feet long, 7 feet high and unlit. While I was there I sometimes felt on the verge of death after beatings with a black electrical cable about two inches thick. They mostly aimed for my palms but sometimes missed and hit my wrists. Other times, I was left alone in a special 'waiting room' within earshot of others' screams. At the end of the day, they would tell me that tomorrow would be worse. In those 10 1/2 months I lost about 40 pounds. I never saw, but only heard, the agony of my fellow prisoners. I was so scared I urinated on myself twice."

Arar said he would have admitted to anything to end the torture. He continued in his piece:

> "I agreed to sign any document they put before me, even those I wasn't allowed to read. And eventually I would say anything at all to avoid more torture. 'Do you want me to use that?' someone would ask when I didn't answer soon enough, pointing to a steel chair in the corner of the interrogation room.
>
> "No, I told them, I did not want them to use that. And yes, I told them, I had been to Afghanistan. It wasn't true, but it seemed important enough to my jailers. After a month, broken physically and mentally, I was also instructed to write these things down on a piece of paper next to other answers to other questions that they had gone ahead and penned on my behalf."

Reuters

Arar with wife Monia Mazigh at November 4 Ottawa press conference.

The Grand Inquisitors of the Spanish Inquisition could get their victims to admit to the most fantastic and absurd acts of witchcraft. This was accepted as evidence proving that the accused had intimate relations with the devil. Torture techniques today are if anything more effective in getting their victims to make self-incriminating statements. With the mentality of bloodthirsty crusaders carrying out their global "war against evil," Bush administration officials have pointed to the confessions extracted from Arar under torture as evidence of his supposed guilt (*New York Times*, 15 November)!

Arar was fortunate enough to have a determined activist wife, Monia Mazigh, who campaigned for human rights groups to take up the fight for his freedom.

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Down With the USA-Patriot Act!

WORKERS VANGUARD

2003 SUBJECT INDEX

Issue No. 794 (3 January) through No. 816 (26 December)

GUIDE TO THE SUBJECT INDEX

- This subject index covers issues of *Workers Vanguard* published during 2003, from issue No. 794 (3 January) through the end-of-the-year issue No. 816 (26 December). During this time, *WV* was published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August.
- The fullest listing is by SUBJECT. Subject headings are arranged alphabetically. Entries are listed chronologically with two exceptions: all entries comprising a series are listed together immediately following the first entry of the series; corrections immediately follow the relevant entry. An asterisk (*) after the page location of an entry indicates that a correction follows.
- Entries are listed under subject heads. In some cases, subject heads are broken down into subcategories. These subcategories are listed immediately after the initial subject head and preceded by a dot (•). The numbers following each entry headline give the issue number, date and page number(s) for the article. Thus:

  Victory to Yale Strikers! (YSp), #809, 12 Sept. (12, 7)

  means the headline of the article, issue No. 809, dated 12 September 2003, beginning on page 12 and continuing on page 7.
- No entry is listed twice; refer to cross references for guidance in locating the subject head for particular articles. Cross references are of two types: those following the word "see" deal centrally with the subject head; those following the words "see also" are related articles. Subject heads in cross references are separated by a semicolon, while subcategories of subject heads are separated by a comma. Thus:

  BRITAIN—And see **Iraq: U.S. War and Occupation, Antiwar Protests**. See also **Civil Liberties: General.**

  means that in addition to the articles listed under the subject head **BRITAIN**, articles about Britain can be found by going to the subject head **IRAQ** and looking under the subcategories **U.S. War and Occupation** and **Antiwar Protests**. Related articles can be found by going to the subject head **CIVIL LIBERTIES** and looking under the subcategory **General.**
- Individuals mentioned in articles are usually not listed separately unless the article is primarily about the given person. Foreign political organizations are generally listed under appropriate countries, while U.S. political organizations are listed under their organizational names.
- Articles relating to foreign countries are listed under geographical headings and not necessarily under any other subject heading. Articles which deal centrally with U.S. foreign policy will be found under **U.S.: International Relations**, except those articles that refer to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, which will be found under **IRAQ: U.S. War and Occupation.** Articles dealing with domestic aspects of the "War on Terror" are located under **CIVIL LIBERTIES: General**; those dealing particularly with attacks on immigrants will be found under **IMMIGRATION**.
- The periodic columns by death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal are listed under the subject heading **ABU-JAMAL** in the subcategory **Message from Death Row**; articles on his case and the campaign to free him are in the subcategory **Defense Campaign**.
- Abbreviations used in entries are:
  - C: Correction
  - CSDN: Class-Struggle Defense Notes article
  - L: Letter
  - R: Review
  - S: Series
  - W&R: *Women and Revolution* article
  - YSp: *Young Spartacus* article

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